

# Common Ground

Letters to Italy Sylvan Gotshal  
and Halsey Munson

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HUMAN RELATIONS AND WORLD SURVIVAL

Brock Chisholm

PUERTO RICAN STRENGTH J. Mayone Stycos

UNDER ANY FLAG Milla Z. Logan

JAPANESE ETIQUETTE Bradford Smith

THE LOGIC OF THE SEGREGATIONISTS

Arnold M. Rose

IN THE FLOW OF TIME Beatrice Griffith

MONUMENT OF, FOR, AND BY THE LIVING

Isabel Currier

— *and others* —

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AUTUMN 1948

# *American Me*

## By BEATRICE GRIFFITH



Deep-bedded in the veins of America run the strains of Mexico, of Indian and Conquistador, of legend and dark beauty. Only a river and an imaginary line divide our Southwest from Mexico; Mexicans are our fourth largest racial minority; yet they have had more than their share of poverty and trouble.

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To further an appreciation of what each group has contributed to America, to uphold the freedom to be different, and to encourage the growth of an American culture which will be truly representative of all the elements that make up the American people.

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## LETTERS TO ITALY

SYLVAN GOTSHAL AND  
HALSEY MUNSON

IN A WARM moist kitchen near the fish wharves of San Francisco a fisherman hushed his noisy children while he carefully wrote a letter to his brother. The snow was still deep on the ground when a farmer walked into the office of Milwaukee's *La Tribuna Italiana*, where there was a staff of girls waiting to help him write a letter to his uncle. In a suburb of New York a school teacher penned a carefully phrased letter to a cousin. And, in the city itself, a municipal official, sitting late in his quiet office, thoughtfully read over what he had written to an aunt.

The letter-writers were Americans of Italian descent writing to their relatives in Italy, asking them not to let the Communists deceive them; telling them what the United States had done for Italy and Italians; asking them to vote for the democratic forces and a republican form of government in the coming elections on April 18.

Late in 1947 and early in 1948 there were many hundreds of such letter-writers; by March of 1948 there were thousands; and by April a million extra letters a week for Italy were passing through the New York Post Office. All over America, wherever Italian Americans lived—from Chicago to New Orleans and Boston to

San Francisco—American citizens of Italian origin or descent wrote letters. First it was only those individuals who had close ties in Italy and had followed events carefully, or had some reason to be alarmed for the safety of their relatives in the old country. As Soviet strategy became clearer, as Communist adherents grew bolder, more numerous, and more violent in Italy, concern spread rapidly among Italian Americans here. They all seemed to see the need for action at about the same time, which isn't too surprising since they were all reading the same news reports and getting substantially the same letters from home. However, the movement was so spontaneous that even today there are probably a thousand people, each of whom thinks he started the "Letters to Italy" campaign.

There are a few points that should be made early in this story of the recent yeasty movement among the Italian Americans. Although social groups, clubs, newspapers—especially Italian-language papers—and several national organizations eventually took part in the movement, and although masses of people were involved, it was essentially a plea for democracy from one person to another, from one member of a family to another member, from friend to friend.

There was no guiding hand, no central agency of propaganda, no outside financial support. Americans of Italian background took the most direct, the simplest, most effective step possible: a mass appeal, made simultaneously but independently—something unique in history. In it, and in the variety of peoples which immigration has given us, Americans as a whole might see, if they would, a unique resource which our country possesses—a resource which in these critical times could be used to counter anti-American propaganda, promote better understanding, and spread the democratic idea.

As far as they individually and immediately were concerned, these Italian Americans had nothing to gain, no selfish motive in advancing the cause of democracy. In a material way, it mattered little to them which way the elections went. They were moved by a nostalgic memory of their childhood, by a sentimental attachment for the Italy of their fathers and mothers, as Catholics by a horror of the Godlessness of Communism, and, more often than the cynic will believe, by a deep love for America and a fervent belief in a political system based on the dignity and the importance of the individual.

You must understand, too, that this article does not profess to make a complete report. A complete report is a virtual impossibility, so that here you will find only the pattern, the characteristic elements of the movement. Even the organizations which took part—the clubs, the committees, the fraternal orders—were unorganized, limited in locality and numbers, and so individualistic in their decisions that it is closer to the truth to speak of them as individuals. In one suburban New York city, for instance, with a population of 23,000, there are eleven Italian American organizations, each of which had a separate opinion as to the

best means of making an appeal to the Italian people. Each had little knowledge of and less interest in, what the others were doing. Nowhere are there facts or figures or a useful record of events to bring the whole picture together.

As the day for voting neared, basically the American appeal to Italy was through letters, millions of personal letters, though short-wave radio, mailable phonograph records, cablegrams, and radiograms were also used.

The research historian of the future, trying to weigh American influence in European politics in this period, will find a wealth of material in Italy in these "America letters." For the most part, the letter-writers were everyday Americans, not given to carbon copies, and the rich source material for an article like this is therefore now almost entirely on the other side of the Atlantic. Enough copies of letters are available, however, to indicate the variety and the pattern.

They are as different in tone as you might expect. The New York World-Telegram, at the height of the avalanche of letters, printed several. One was so American in expression that the Italian cousin to whom it was written was probably a bit confused. It was apparently one letter in an exchange of several:

"Well, I can't blame you too much for your uncertainty, because conditions being as they are in your country, it must seem fantastic to you to believe that this country is living under conditions so unlike those of your country.

"Well . . . to square you away on this score, and from one cousin to another, please believe what I am about to write."

He then went on to an explanation of the Bill of Rights and the guarantees of freedom of speech, religion, press, and assembly, and how Americans speak out for or against anyone in public life.

Another letter in the New York

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World-Telegram, well written though rather emotional in tone, turned Garibaldi back on the Communists:

"As a woman who has recently been given the power to express herself through the medium of the ballot, I hope that you will take advantage of this great opportunity by spreading the seeds of democracy and the republican form of government among your friends. . . . Your great uncle, a Garibaldean who fought to liberate Italy from the yoke of despotism in 1848, set an example. Today, one hundred years later, it is up to you and all women of Italy to free yourselves and Italy from the threat of communism which menaces your country through agents educated and trained in Russia. You women should rally together and make your rallying cry the Garibaldi Hymn."

It is, of course, the homely, intimate spirit, the shared knowledge and experiences, that make these letters the most effective standard-bearers democracy can have. The letter following was written by a young man in the publishing business to his brother, an Italian civil engineer. They had lost track of each other during World War II and the latter years of fascism when the brother was either hiding or in prison.

"Dear Amedeo: I heard recently from Elena, who gave me your new address, that you came through the war unhurt and that you have found new work. I have been counting up: Enrico must be ten years old now and Pietro eight; are there any more since I last heard from you? Let me know what you need. Yesterday I sent to you a package of canned foods. They are easy to get here now that food is plentiful again. At the same time I sent some things to Elena.

"Our sister wrote me that our uncle Fernando died during the war and I have sent money for a mass.

"I am very disturbed by the stories I hear about conditions there. From here it looks as if maybe the Communists will win the coming elections. What do you think? A Moscow victory would be a great tragedy for Italy and for you. I hope you can see that now for yourself from the actions of Togliatti and Nenni. I am especially worried because I know that you have always been a rather radical fellow. You must keep in mind that this is Italy's great opportunity for a really democratic government, a government which will do what the Italian people tell it to do, not what a king demands or what is ordered by a man in far off Moscow who does not know our Italian needs. Remember that it is Russia, to whom Italian Communists look, that is keeping Italy out of the United Nations, who insisted on the heavy reparations which are keeping Italy poor, and demanded a full share of Italian ships. We here in the United States have been on Italy's side, demanding nothing in the way of reparations or ships and have, on the other hand, given Italy food and money and urged that you be given your voice in world affairs in the United Nations.

"Don't let Togliatti fool you with his lies. We have plenty of everything in this country and, while everything is expensive, wages are high and everyone has a job.

"The republican form of government here gives everyone a chance; I have prospered far more than anything I could have done in Italy. If you will help Italy to be a real democracy, all Italians will have a chance to prosper and make Italy a great nation again. Your brother, Luigi."

It became evident fairly soon that those who could write personal letters were writing them but that there were still

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great numbers of people wanting to write who had no one to write to. To help these people, chiefly second- and third-generation Italian Americans, the group organizations—social clubs, religious societies, and so on—gathered addresses and composed and had printed form letters which could be sent to anyone. Newspapers from Boston to San Francisco took a hand in this and printed letters which could be clipped from the paper, signed, and sent on their way.

In New Jersey's Asbury Park it was possible to walk into the local lodge of the Order of the Sons of Italy any hour of the day or night, sign a letter, and walk out without even worrying about the postage. A northern Westchester, New York, Committee to Stop Communism in Italy mimeographed a letter which they placed in stacks in stores, barber shops, and other public places where Italian Americans passed. The Port Chester, New York, Civic Club sent such a letter of their own to a long list of Italian postmasters, mayors, and priests, with a note asking them to post the letter in a public place if possible. In all, that one club in a small New York city sent out a thousand letters.

The letter, itself, is typical of the thousands of similar letters which were printed:

"We Italian residents of America note with consternation the activities which the followers of Stalin are now carrying on in Italy to put her under the yoke of Russia.

"Communism is today the greatest national menace because it endeavors to contaminate the pure and serene atmosphere of the family, to profane the church, to corrupt the public servants, to bring production to a stop, and to throw the whole country into misery and chaos. . . . You all know because it has been

demonstrated by facts, that America is the only nation which has assisted Italy and which will not now cease to be generous with the means necessary for her survival and resurgence. America is the only nation which Italy has found to be her friend in her hour of need. . . .

"Defeat the Communist forces in the next election and ensure the victory of liberty and democracy which will be the greatest victory for our Italy.

"Oppose yourselves actively to the Communists. Place the stamp of infamy on the enemies of God and man. Stand united for the triumph of democracy and of free institutions."

But the form letter was not for Toledo's Mayor Michael V. DeSalle. His idea was that "Letters should be written in a personal vein to get over the idea of what America means to the writer. Not a sermon or a lecture, each letter should tell of such things as new jobs, business experiences, family life, or pleasant vacations."

Parade magazine credits Mayor DeSalle with suggesting the mass letter-writing idea to Drew Pearson when the Friendship Train stopped in Toledo. In any event DeSalle did such a thorough job of selling the idea to his home town that Toledo set aside April as "Letters for Democracy Month," and 18,000 high school and college students entered a letter-writing contest. The letters were sent not merely to Italy, however, but to any foreign country in which the writer had a friend or relative.

Beyond the letter-writing, various people and groups made other kinds of appeals.

Most Italian-language newspapers, for instance, sent, in so far as they could afford them, free subscriptions of their paper to people in Italy. A few publishers,

indeed, were so generous with free subscriptions as to seriously endanger their paper's financial structure. Also many individuals gave subscriptions to Italian friends and relatives. Others, when they had read their own papers, sent them in bundles to Italy. The importance of sending these papers was considerable. They are designed for home consumption, not export; obviously they truly reflect American conditions and are not suspect as propaganda.

The New York World-Telegram carried a story about a man named Anthony D'Angelo, who operates a luncheonette on a North River pier. Mr. D'Angelo, in every package to his family in Italy, sent about twelve pounds of English-language papers which he had persuaded news companies to save for him. As Mr. D'Angelo said, "Even Italians who can't read English can recognize the space devoted to amusements and department store advertising and realize that these things are for sale or they wouldn't be spending money advertising them."

Still other people regularly clipped pertinent articles from their papers, articles which described some phase of the American scene, or in which was implicit some right such as open criticism of a public official, and enclosed them in their letters. Almost every Italian-language newspaper had requests for reprints of editorials to be used as enclosures.

American magazines, too, were mailed to Italy—magazines of all kinds but especially picture magazines that showed conditions in this country. Pictures of American homes and automobiles, and of Americans working and having fun, are very effective counters to Soviet tales of economic disaster and social upheavals here.

The English-language newspapers, too, were very energetic in publicizing the idea

of "Letters to Italy." It was, after all, a very popular affair, close to the hearts of the people. Many newspapers did a full reporting job on the letter-writing activity, and some papers, notably the Scripps-Howard chain, featured it for a time. The articles in the World-Telegram by Murray Davis were relatively few, but effective. One man wrote that paper: "Is it possible for some of your good readers to write to my sister, a teacher in Naples, advising her of these lies the Communists are telling? I have tried to no avail."

However, it was newspapers such as *La Voce Del Popolo* in Detroit, *L'Italia* in Chicago, *Il Progresso* in New York, *La Voce Italiana* in Paterson, *La Tribuna Italiana* in Milwaukee, the Italian-language papers, that did the best work, each according to its own lights. For instance, *La Voce Del Popolo* wrote sturdily: "This newspaper has been always a strenuous and open fighter for civil liberties. When tyranny was coming from Fascism, it fought Fascism. . . . Now that the tyranny comes from Communism, this paper has been decidedly anticommunist . . . not mainly from religious principles, but mainly and logically from civil principles. . . . This is our consistent policy; any extra recommendation, or writing to Italians to vote anticommunist, was just incidental. . . ."

During the three months preceding the election on April 18, nearly all the Italian-language papers carried news stories about "Letters to Italy." As a first move they sought comment on the idea from such prominent Italian Americans as Ferdinand Pecora, Justice of the Supreme Court of New York State; George J. Spatuzza of Chicago; Rudolph Naccarato, Public Prosecutor of Olympia; Michael V. DeSalle, Mayor of Toledo; and Judge Juvenal Marchisio, former president of American Relief for Italy, Inc.,



who said in part: "It is very important to us for the Italian people to appreciate whence help comes. The Italian people are not communistically inclined, but a hungry stomach doesn't reason. They will follow any crackpot who will promise a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow.

"Italy is the last bastion in Europe for free enterprise. As Italy goes, it is fair to assume from past history, so will all of Europe."

Every day the papers carried pictures and stories with new comments, reports on activities, new ideas. On many, if not most days, there were headlines. There were stories of false claims by Italian Communists that needed refuting, and reports on American aid to Italy.

Besides sample letters which could be clipped, there were boxed suggestions on what to write about, such as this in the *Osia News*, the official publication of the Order of the Sons of Italy:

1. There is no rationing of consumer goods in the U.S. because supplies are comparatively plentiful.
2. There is no clothing shortage.
3. Public schools, free to any child, are not dictated to by government officials.
4. There is no censorship of newspapers—all are free to print the truth even if critical of the government.
5. The United States approved of Italy's membership in the United Nations.
6. The U.S. attempted to secure a just peace for Italy.
7. The United States waived all claims to any part of the Italian fleet.
8. The United States supported the Italian people in their desire to have a governor of Trieste who had a completely neutral opinion.

They were, in short, topics that might persuade the Italian reader to think better of America and worse of Russia.

Generoso Pope's *Il Progresso* pounded so hard on the "Letters to Italy" campaign that Pietro Nenni singled out *Il Progresso* for a virulent attack across the Atlantic in his party's paper *l'Avanti*.

One of the most moving pleas for democracy was made early in April through Station WOV in New York. WOV is an American commercial radio station which devotes roughly half its broadcasting time to Italian-language programs. In its regular news periods for the week of March 29 it offered to make recordings of messages by war brides from Italy and then airmail the records to Italy without charge. They had expected a hundred or so requests and had planned to spend part of Saturday making the recordings. Instead, the sky fell in on them; they were deluged with requests and spent all of Saturday and Sunday making as many recordings as possible. During that week, people of all kinds, asking permission to send messages, jammed the telephone lines, snowed under the mail clerks, and crowded the reception room. Three matrons of a vintage clearly not bridal came the first day of recording. They insisted they were war brides—war brides of 1918.

Everything possible was done to speed these records to Italy. Program director Tom Morgan delivered the discs to Postmaster Goldman on Monday, who saw to it that they were on a plane to Italy that same day. By Wednesday, all up and down the Italian peninsula, relatives and neighbors were gathering to hear the voice of an Italian girl who had so lately been part of their household, a member of the community. When she spoke about her new home, her husband's job, the ease of shopping in America, one feels sure her family and neighbors believed her.

More than four hundred records were

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sent on the fifth of April by Station WOV, but no one knows how many Italian Americans visited their local radio shops or the recording booths in amusement parks to make individual recordings to send. The cost of a record is little, and it can be played again and again, every shading and emphasis in the voice commented on and savored for meaning. Like a letter, it has more permanence than a radio broadcast and more human warmth than a cablegram.

One of the more interesting and subtle pleas was made not by Americans but by the Italians themselves. After the peace treaty with Italy was signed, the Committee for a Just Peace with Italy, Inc. found itself with some unspent money—\$1,004.68. Various ways of disposing of it were discussed—charity, milk for the children of Italy, medicine for the Italian sick—and then one of their number, Mr. Umberto Gualtieri, suggested that the Committee offer the money as a prize for the best articles on what the United States had done or was doing for the economic rehabilitation of Italy.

The articles were to be written by Italians in Italy and published by the Italian press. After setting the conditions, the Committee handed the matter over to an Italian society, the GESA (*Giornalisti Editori Scrittori Associati*), which managed the contest without charge. The GESA screened out a few of the best articles and sent them here for the decision of the judges.

The two major winners, Geralamo Pedoia and Giuseppe Tucci, wrote scholarly articles, heavily detailed with figures and charts, on the financial and general economic aid given Italy by the United States. One of the contestants, however—one of the very few women entered—wrote about the human scene, of rehabilitation closer to the heart than figures and dollar signs. She had traveled

in the area about Forli, a city in northern Italy, and wrote eleven articles, chiefly about the children there who were being helped by American Relief for Italy.

Another contestant, Mario Dorato, wrote in an historically sociological vein an essay more closely keyed to the election than those of the other contestants. (All the articles were published before April 18.) One of his articles, which reminded Italians that Garibaldi had loved America so well he had become a naturalized United States citizen, ran directly counter to the Communists' efforts to link Garibaldi, in his revolutionary character, to their party.

In the radio field, aside from government broadcasts, WRUL stands out in serving the people who wished to speak to Italy. In the three months before the election, WRUL, which had had regular broadcasts in Italian, gradually stepped up its short-wave beams to Italy from fifteen minutes to thirty minutes, then to an hour, and finally to an hour and a half in the last week or so.

WRUL are the call letters for the World Wide Broadcasting Foundation, a non-commercial, non-profit organization also called the World Radio University and Radio Boston. One of the purposes of the Foundation is "To foster, cultivate and encourage the spirit of international understanding, and to promote the enlightenment of individuals throughout the world."

The Foundation's programs to Italy were conducted, from March 18 on, by Francesca Braggiotti Lodge, the wife of Representative John D. Lodge of Massachusetts. She invited a number of prominent Americans of Italian background, as well as other interested Americans, to speak to the Italian people. Among the first was Natalie Wales Paine, Chairman of Common Cause, Inc., which

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was co-operating in sponsoring the programs.

In a weekly series, Mrs. Lodge had state senators describe their own states, placing particular emphasis on the part Americans of Italian descent played in the state's industrial and cultural life. Drew Pearson also spoke over WRUL, as well as Luigi Antonini, and other members of the Italian American Labor Council, the CIO and AFL, and people like A. P. Giannini, the banker, and Ferdinand Pecora. But Mrs. Lodge also had average people on her programs, people more typical of Italian Americans and Americans as a whole—ebullient Graziano Franze, for example, an expert shoemaker, whose enthusiastic message about America had to be toned down a little; Camillo Pagano, a successful real estate broker; Peter DeStefano, a political leader in his district and a working pharmacist with a small but thoroughly up-to-date drug store of his own. These are the people who, whatever their national origins, are America, and so are to be listened to most carefully.

Mr. Franze began: "I am one of those who fought under the Italian flag for freedom. I was prepared to lay down my life for freedom.

"I am not asking my Italian 'genetori' to lay down your lives or to shoulder arms—but a much simpler task. I am asking you, as one who knows liberty, to vote for liberty and freedom. . . . Vote against Communism."

Radio messages are rather oratorical, perhaps, less humanly warm and persuasive than personal letters. Mr. Franze is every bit as impassioned as his message suggests, but much more convincing in conversation. But the degree of effectiveness is, after all, relative. It is easy to imagine Mr. Franze's cousin going about saying, "Did you hear Graziano on the radio last night? He must be a big man

in America to speak on the radio; see what he says here in his letter." For Mr. Franze also wrote letters, not only to his cousins but to friends he had gone to school with and known as a young man in Italy.

When Station WRUL had set its machinery in motion, material from all parts of the country was funneled into it. In small towns wherever Italian Americans lived, newspapers like the Greenwich Times and Milwaukee's *La Tribuna Italiana* arranged for transcriptions, selecting four or five people representative of the local Italian American colony. Independent radio stations such as *Il Progresso's* WHOM offered free recording time on a far wider scale. During the week before April 18, people stood outside WHOM's doors in a line four abreast and a block long.

As the day for voting drew nearer, people were urged to use airmail, then to send cable- and radiograms, and to take part in WRUL's short-wave broadcasts. Newspapers printed information on the cost, the location of offices, and the procedure in sending cables. Some papers gave far more material aid. The Denver Post and the Broadway, a local Denver theater, paid the cost of cablegrams; *La Tribuna Italiana* paid airmail, cable, and radio costs, and provided a staff of girls to assist in writing letters.

Newspapers were far from alone in the work of spreading the word. The St. Petersburg Chamber of Commerce raised money to pay for cablegrams. Mr. Antonini's Local 89 used its regular hour on Station WEDD to urge the sending of messages to Italy. Civic-conscious individuals used their personal prestige to widen the base of "friendship" letter-writing by word-of-mouth publicity—Fred Talento of Rye, who spoke out whenever he found himself in a group of Italian Americans; Ralph Marlowe of Philadelphia, who

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toured Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware; Judge Juvenal Marchisio, who spoke to groups about conditions in Italy from his first-hand experience gained in the AMG and during his trips as president of American Relief for Italy.

Democratic forces in Italy were also substantially helped by a group of industrialists brought together by a well-informed New York lawyer. They raised a considerable sum of money which was sent to Italy, where it was used to buy newsprint for the paper-starved Italian press, and for posters and slogan placards and such necessary campaign matters as the expenses of field workers and loud-speaker truck units. They also planned and managed "Free Italy Day," which did so much to dramatize our goodwill toward Italy. That story with pictures of the pretty Italian American girls giving away white carnations on the streets was carried to the Italian press by most of the news services.

This has been a story in the main about individuals, Italian Americans, each of whom, aroused by a danger to something he loved, made a personal effort to stave off disaster. Their message was effective because it came from the heart, because it came from trusted relatives or friends, or at least from people of a common heritage. Perhaps it was effective also because it came from people who had achieved a goal which for more than a century has been the traditional objective of the poor of Europe.

The important point is that people cared enough to do something, and that what they did they did in their own way with neither coercion nor instruction. In general they adopted the same methods of combatting the danger, but, in the particular, their individual approach was as varied as the thinking of individuals always is. This lack of organization was at

once the strength and weakness of the movement.

People who had been away from Italy for thirty years, who had not lived through Fascism, whose continuity of communication had been broken by the war, and who had not experienced the war and its aftermath, may have used expressions and methods which could be misunderstood. For example, saying, "Vote democratic," might mean to an unlettered Italian the Democratic Popular Front, the Communist-extreme-left socialist coalition.

On the other hand, because the letters from American citizens were from relatives, friends, or at least from men and women with the same cultural heritage as their own, the Italian people listened. A planned campaign backed by a government or any central agency would have been at once suspected by the propaganda-weary Italians.

There is no way of counting the number of people who wrote letters, or of knowing how many letters each wrote, but there is no doubt that Americans of Italian origin wrote literally millions of letters urging Italian voters to vote for one or another of the parties favoring democracy as we know it. How great an influence these letters exerted is a story that must come from Italy, but that they were one of the important factors in bringing about the democratic victory on April 18 there can be little doubt.

In that result and the spontaneous uprising among Italian Americans that helped to produce it, there is a lesson the United States ought not to forget. There is not a country anywhere that does not have representatives here, trained in republican democracy, active and prosperous in communities and businesses of their own choosing. They are far more aware of the advantages of personal freedom than any native-born citizen can be. In these Americans of foreign heritage

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the United States has an enormously valuable potential, a tremendous reservoir of power with which to help people of all nations reach freedom and the abundances of the spirit, mind, and body which are the attributes of democracy.

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Sylvan Gotshal is a New York City lawyer, active in the business, financial, and philanthropic world, representing many outstanding firms and organizations, and is a director of many corporations. He has helped organize a number

of associations of public or semi-public interest. For many years he represented numerous international interests, particularly clients of French and Swiss origin. Among his other current activities he is chairman of the Board of the United Jewish Appeal of Greater New York and treasurer and a director of the Common Council for American Unity.

Halsey Munson has been in the publishing business since 1938. Currently free-lancing, he has been an editor for Bobbs-Merrill, Creative Age Press, and Didier, Publishers.

## THE DOVE

CHARLOTTE MILES

*White, glistening like new snow she came  
In driving rain out of the blurred gray sky,  
A sudden vision. At my window pane  
She rested and endured my wondering gaze.*

*Oh, she was hurt. The immaculate throat  
Was throbbing with an unknown pain,  
Yet perfect was her plumage, clear the round eye,  
The pinions gathered in unruffled fold.*

*Behind thin glass, so near was she, and I  
Bereft of chance to shelter her with warmth,  
A pigeon lost, a frail, a humble thing,  
Doomed innocence, the bitter mystery.*

*And is it thus, that the white Dove returns,  
In twilight gloom beneath the warring skies?  
Where will she fly, where rest her silver wing,  
When night will fall, and rain turn into snow?*

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Charlotte Miles is a German-born poet who came to the United States in 1927.



## IN THE FLOW OF TIME

BEATRICE GRIFFITH

### HOMES INVADED IN HUNT FOR PACHUCOS

#### OUTBREAK FLARES ANEW

Herald Express  
July 10, 1943

WE RODE the red car back to Los Angeles, but before we got to the station we knew there was trouble down town—big trouble. It wasn't like Friday and Saturday nights when the sailors invaded our parts of town and tried to mop up on the zootsuiters, and any other Mexican guys they see. This was worse. The people on the streetcar were talking and reading the papers about the riots. Kids selling papers on the corners were yelling in the windows about the sailor-zootsuit war, not about the real war. The lady in front of us got off at Vermont Avenue, and Mingo grabbed the paper she left. WEB OF ZOOT-SUIT GANGS SPREADS OVER ENTIRE L. A. AREA—that was the headline in the Herald paper in his hands. There was a lot of talk, too, about the Mayor and police getting tough with the zootsuit gangsters. Mingo looked at me.

"That means us, I guess, don't it? We're wearin' drapes, and we're Mexicans. Hiya, gangster!"

Early this morning Mingo and me had took the streetcar out to San Fernando Valley, hopped the bus, and soon we were on the little dusty road going up the hill to my grandfather's farm. We both wore our drapes 'cause it was the last day be-

fore the Army, and we were going to a party at my house tonight. Out there in the country the zootsuit riots were far far away, like a dream you dream in jail. I remembered times before, coming here, when the hills was yellow with poppies and butterflies, and you'd see the hummingbirds dive bomb deep into the hearts of the wild tobacco blossoms. This morning was soft and warm, full of sun and sage smells, with all the little bug noises you hear when you stand still in the middle of a field going over the hills in summer.

We didn't work at the Red Arrow Truck Company today 'cause we'd never be forgiven if we didn't enjoy God's green earth and the radiance on it. Tomorrow we both cut out down that train track for some Army camp, and then it will be that in this war the full adventure of living has started. So this day we go hunting in the hills by Canoga Park.

My grandfather and lots Mexicans live there in the country where there is hunting in the low hills. Us kids always used to go out there from Maravilla to hunt for rabbits; my grandfather taught me that when I was real little. We would go from the shack in town where there was not much food and out into the brown hills, where the rabbits were like God's little animals—many and lots. Sometimes the summer morning was white and still and lonely, all quiet with no sun, and the San Francisco train would come in whistling whistling, way off over the river. Then those little rabbits would fly like

bullets across the dark ground, and we would eat for a week.

My grandfather I tell you is a man. That's what he is, a real man. You know, sometimes Mexicans are more old in California than Americans. My great-grandfather came here to California in the days of the gold rush to mine gold, a Yaqui from Sonora, Mexico. He was a famous Indian fighter too, but he didn't get rich mining gold. My grandfather used to drive a six-mule team up with the dawn in the wheat fields. Up at four, home at nine. And now, with seventy-six years of living he works fourteen hours a day and reads with no glasses. Once every six months he comes to Los Angeles to watch the people rushing here and there on the streets. Then he goes back to his little farm, happy like a chicken in a big hole of loose dirt. The city is not for him. But his fields of alfalfa, and squash, with the little garden and lemon trees by the house, with the cows in the barn—there is he happy.

At the house my grandfather was out in the alfalfa. But my grandmother gave us long long drinks of cold milk, then some tortillas and beans for lunch. From behind the door we got the two guns we used to hunt with when we was kids, and with Pancho, the old dog, we were gone, cutting over the back hills.

Mingo was happy, man. He was a little borachito, he was so happy, 'cause he had patched up his quarrel with his chick. We walked down the dry riverbed, broke through some brush and trees into another field. Mingo asked me, "Think the paratroopers will take us? We'd look pretty sharp in those Army zootsuits."

I tell him, "Sure they'll take us. Why, heck, when we've got to think things out, we're okay. It's the book knowledge we haven't got. But I know I could lead my men in and out of danger because I've been in so much myself. I've had a lot of experience in running away from the en-

emy, in being smarter—whether it was hunger or jail or just life."

Mingo stopped quiet for a minute, then aimed slow at a little rabbit sitting on top a rock looking at the world. He shot his .22, and that little rabbit flew clear in the air, turned a somersault, came down, and started running fast the other way. He shot again and got it. "Baby, that's a sweet one," he yelled and ran over to it with the dog barking ahead of him. We walked along some more without seeing rabbits for some minutes. Then he asked me, "Danny, why don't you marry Jessie? You know she's crazy for you."

I told him, "I'm crazy for her, too, but she's got big ideas. I want my kids to have a mother with a good education like her. She speaks English real smooth, not like in my days when I learn English words because they worry me until I know what they mean, and read books and books to learn English. But Jessie is poor. Her family's got big ideas for her to marry, and I'm not one of 'em. I tell her to run away and we'll go to Arizona to marry. And after the war I'll own my own trucks and make money. But no go. Last night I tell her, 'Jessie, love is like a big game of checkers, to get anywhere you have to make a big move.' But she just looks cute and says she don't know how to play checkers! Like heck she don't."

We walked along, far over the hot hills in the windy sunshine and shot three more rabbits, running rabbits, the strong ones. Then after some more time we sat under a big oak tree and talk the talk you think and not say out loud—the talk you give your dog and sometimes your friend. While we are eating beans and tortillas, Mingo lies down looking up at the blue sky for a long time. Then he is up quick and on his feet. With a tortilla in one hand he puts both up to the sky and shouts, "All I want, God, is my girl and

three sons and to be happy. That's all, God. Hear me, God? Hear me?"

But I tell Mingo that all he hears is that little gas engine for the water pump on the next hill, that's all. God's busy. But Mingo shakes his head at me and smiles his big smile and say, "Last night I give Dora the ring the priest blessed. We'll get married when I come home from the war. I asked God last night and He say, Sure, it's okay by Him. I tell Him every day so He won't forget."

I tell Mingo, "I think that with guys that get married it's like this. As a kid you make up the person in your heart you are going to marry. And always you are hunting, because that person in our heart changes and is never caught. It's like that, whether God hears you or not. You are always hunting for that person in your heart."

Mingo lit him a cigarette and leaned his head against the tree. "Well, my old man wasn't hunting for no person in his heart when he came here to America. He found her in Chihuahua. He was hunting for a country where a man could grow his family in peace and not starve. He came from the fighting country, where every Indian head brought back to the rich hacendados would give pesos. So, for the living of his life, he come out to California and worked for ten cents an hour, 'cause there was a strike. Me, I think it's like a dog that can't find the right tree, we're all time hunting something—a woman, a job, money, food—something. Every day our lives we're hunting something."

After some more talking and hunting we come in from walking over the hills. The shadows were long and black on the earth 'cause the night was settling down, and we drink deep of the air in the night fields. At the house my aunt gave us tortillas fresh from the stove and cool beer. Then we roast a rabbit crisp and brown with juice running from it. My grand-

father got him a cigarette and sat by the stove. I know he was just waiting for the night and a fire, for all the stories and people in his mind to come alive to his tongue. From inside his shirt he took his St. Christopher medal, the one he carried all his life. It was so old and worn you could hardly see the old Saint on it. He told me, "It will bring you home safe from the war. I don't need it longer." Then he gave it me, and got a tall beer from the icebox.

When he did this my aunt got up from eating and went in the next room to the little Saint in his corner by the piano. She took from there another medal for Mingo. She give him hers so he can come back and marry that chick, I guess.

And while we sat in the kitchen looking from the door into the hills and trees, life was sweet, man, it was good and sweet for the minute. Then I tell Mingo we better cut out, 'cause there's the long ride back, and the party and the chicks—and the zootsuit trouble in town. So we cut down the dark road going home.

But now, coming back, it was like the people on the streetcar had never seen Mexicans before, the way they looked at us. When we got up to get off, they stared hard at our pants until Mingo tells one of 'em, "Lady, you can buy them at Burton's, 15-inch cuff. Just plunk down \$65 and they'll give you the whole suit."

The conductor yelled us to pipe down. We rolled into the subway then and everybody poured out the doors.

We scrambled out of that car and up through the station into Hill Street. It was like the sailors and marines were taking over the whole city. Only now there were soldiers too, yelling, with all the gabachos helping them. They had bottles and belts, clubs and iron pipes in their hands. They were waving them over their heads. We got pushed against the building by the crowd who was looking up the

street where there was a lot of shouting and where somebody was getting beaten. The people were filling the streets, packing them from building to building, yelling like they were drunk or crazy. They didn't see us yet 'cause we had on leather coats and they couldn't see our pants in the mob. The air was full of excitement.

Some sailors near us called, "Come on, you Pachucos, you yellow bastards, we'll get you—all of you." The crowd laughed and moved, pushing every way and everybody. They were all trying to get someplace down the street. Then we heard a roar and somebody yelled, "They got 'em, they got 'em. They got those goddamned zootsuits." And from the corner in front of the theater a mob of sailors poured out with a couple of kids wearing fingertip coats, pulled along in the middle of them. Those kids were getting it all right, with busted heads and bleeding faces—those kids were getting it. Pretty soon, a black coat was thrown up and got passed around with people catching it and tossing it. Then the pants came and another coat, a tan one. Each time the crowd yelled and packed tighter to the center. The police were standing along the sides holding their night sticks, looking pleased about the whole thing. Or maybe they were gazing at the stars in the sky. They didn't do nothing to stop that mob, nothing. A blond girl near us jumped and caught the tan coat that went sailing by. She grabbed it; then she squirmed until she got it on. She danced around in a circle yelling, "I'm a Pachuca, I'm a Pachuca." She was laughing and kissing the sailor next her like she was nuts. Mingo wanted to knock her pink face in, but I grabbed his arm. "There's the alley. We gotta cut out of here."

We pushed on with the crowd until we come to that alley. We was afraid they would see our haircuts in a minute and we'd be dead ducks then, right in the

middle of that mob. While we was pushing our way, with people packed tight around us yelling and laughing, and the guys getting beaten in the streets, my heart was beating fast like somebody was giving me a knockout in the ring and I couldn't stop 'em hitting me. It was like last winter when I was hauling dynamite on a wet downgrade in the mountains. The cattle truck ahead of me caught fire on the horseshoe curve. The driver had no brakes, the load was pushing the truck, pushing that truck that couldn't stop. I jammed hard on my brakes and slowed her down a little, slowed her down, then edged her into the cliff—the whole truck of dynamite. It was like that in the riots. This car of dynamite, the sailors, zootsuits and people were all going downgrade fast, the load was pushing the truck. And the cops had no brakes.

We ran down the alley until we got to the next street. The mob was bigger here, there were thousands of 'em everywhere. Traffic had stopped and the sirens were screaming. Even the ambulances had a hard time pushing through. It looked like the only places where Mexicans was traveling this night was to the jails and hospitals. A yellow streetcar was stopped by a crowd of sailors and marines who got on it yelling, "Gangway, here comes the Navy. We're hunting for zootsuits to burn!" They pushed the motorman out of the way, and the conductor scrambled out the back door. The passengers piled into the street, some climbing out the back door. But the Mexican and Negro kids weren't so lucky. There was a big fight inside with the sailors trying to undress the guys and beat them up. The crowd yelled and cheered and stormed around the car. One of the guys, a kid I know from Flats, a good track fellow in Roosevelt High, got pushed out the streetcar window half dressed. His pants were torn off and he had only one sleeve left. Those sailors

were crazy. Chuey Ramirez never was a zootsuiter, never wore drapes, and here he was getting beat up like all the others. The people grabbed Chuey, and by the time they got through there he was down in the gutter. I couldn't see him more then, but I could hear the yells and laughing around him.

I thought Mingo was going nuts when he saw this. He was getting madder and

car just as the conductor clanged the bell and banged the door shut. Everybody was scared. Mexicans, Negroes, gabachos—everybody was excited and talking. A whole bunch of 'em got off at the big government housing place, and even here you could see sailors trying to get in the recreation hall where some kids was having a dance inside. Police cars and ambulances with Mexican kids, and some with sailors,



madder while we was trying to work our way through to First Street, where we could catch a car that was still running out to the Eastside. Mingo kept saying over and over, "Hell, man, this is a street in Germany tonight. This isn't Los Angeles. This is a street in Germany." Then he grabbed my arm. "Maybe they're coming to our homes. Let's get out of here quick."

We went the short cuts through those next streets until we came to First and Los Angeles below Main Street, where the fight was going hard. We caught the

raced by us. This night the Shore Patrol or MP's almost never caught up with the sailors and soldiers. But the police always came along and mopped up the kids and took 'em to jail. More cars and taxis loaded heavy with sailors and soldiers were moving up First Street. Some had stopped in front of the pool halls and little eating joints and any place else where there was Mexicans. There was trouble everywhere in our part of town.

By the time the streetcar turned, we didn't see many of the sailors and soldiers. They hadn't come to our territory yet,



but the excitement and sounds of sirens had come ahead. Women and girls with little kids in night clothes was standing inside their fences watching up and down the streets.

There was excitement at our house too. Some of the kids had come for the party, and some had already gone to their homes to get weapons. My mother was in the kitchen cooking the big pot of little *tamales* and making the *enchilada* sauce. My sister Dora was crying like she couldn't stop, sitting there at the table. She was coming home this night with her boy friend, and the sailors saw them on North Main Street. They ask him, "You a *Pachuco*?" And he tell them, heck, no, he was only wearin' semi-drapes. But they give it him anyway. They took off his clothes there before her and put his pants on the streetcar tracks. Then they beat him up and the cops came along and threw him in jail for extra. My mother was talking to Dora and cursing the gringos for making trouble. In the other room the kids were sitting around the radio listening to the jive and police calls when they came in. It was like the whole of Los Angeles had busted out with riots: Central, Watts, Dogtown, Flats, Happy Valley, Clanton, Hazard, Marriana, Pecan—all different territories had fights at once. Those sailors and soldiers sure got around the Mexican streets.

Freddie, Chacho, and some more guys came in the back door with stories about the sailors down the block. Freddie said, "They're going in the houses looking everywhere for us guys. They beat up old Jesus Santiago when they saw him sitting on his porch 'cause they said maybe he was the father of a zootsuiter. They knocked him out cold—him with Felix in the South Pacific."

I was glad my girl lived on the other side of town—living over there with the Americans she wouldn't get hurt in this

fight—and anyway her skin is lighter, she doesn't look Mexican much.

Pretty soon you hear the sound of breaking bottles and a lot of yells down the street. Ernestina looked out the window and yelled, "Here they come. They're coming in here!" And in that minute in rushes a whole gang of sailors and marines with bottles and belts and sticks.

One little guy, drunk and yelling names, busted into the door and called out, "Any zootsuiters live here?" When he saw us guys and the girls in the room, he stopped a minute. Then he yelled, "Here's a mess of 'em. Come on, guys, come and get 'em." The fight was on. From the door in the kitchen my mother call them in English. "You disgrace your uniform—*verguenza*—*verguenza*—shame—these boys have done you nothing."

But one of the sailors yelled her back, "Ah, dummy up. If you weren't a lady, we'd do the same to you. These guys raped our wives."

Well, I tell you, that little house was one big explosion. Somebody knocked the lamp by the piano over, and the table in the middle of the room with all our pictures came crashing down with guys on top of it. It was a free-for-all with everybody getting knocked down and getting up again, all the time cursing and swearing and hitting. Rosie and the girls was yelling from the kitchen door, and my mother was crying her tears. Some more fellows came back from outside and piled into the fight to help us out. When the sailors see they are outnumbered, they scam. One of them yelled, "Hey, let's get the hell out of here—Jim's hurt." Then they picked up a guy sprawled on the floor and dragged him out through the screen door with us guys after them.

Most of the sailors piled into a taxi that was waiting in the street and the others jumped into a roadster behind it. Our kids cut out for their homes to see if

anybody was getting hurt there. All up and down the streets people was standing behind their fences crying and cursing, looking past the running sailors and soldiers who were hunting their sons and brothers. The little old Jewish woman next door asked Mingo and me, "Is this a pogrom?" Mingo tell her, "No, it's a revolution, maybe—like in Mexico."

When we come back in the house, my mother was picking up the wrecked furniture and still cursing the sailors, crying all the time. Everything was broken. Even the pictures of her wedding was knocked from the wall, and the front of the radio busted in. Dora and Rosie tried to bandage the cut on Mingo's head and stop the blood coming down his face.

After his head is fixed, we got a couple of bottles of beer out of the icebox and we go and sit on the porch to watch. Mingo tells me, "I am going to Mexico and fight in the airforce. I'll fight with Mexicanos—not with gabachos. Is this what we're fighting for? What Emelio takes his pennies and nickels to school for to buy a jeep? Democracy doesn't work at home. Maybe it would be okay for Hitler to come here and then these Americans would get it too." He was wild and mad. Nothing you tell Mingo makes any difference this night.

I told him, "Not all Americans is like these guys. These guys got something eating in their guts. Anybody who fights for no reason got something eating his guts. You gotta go with me in the Army, Mingo. We gotta stick together, Mingo. In the Army it's different with Mexicans."

Mingo was hating deep in his heart, and when anger goes into the heart of a Mexican it stays a long long time. He looks hard at me. "What happened to you—getting lambie with the gabachos? What's eatin' you, dope? What did any American do for you? Nothing! And tonight they beat us up—beat us up while our guys are

overseas fighting. Why should I go sweat my guts out in the Army for this? Maybe you like it. I don't. This land used to belong to the Mexicans. Maybe it will again. Maybe we'll get it back. I'd fight for that. In Europe, if the Germans see more than two people together on the street, they arrest them. Here they beat you up.



What's different? This is like a street in Germany tonight. You know it." He flipped his knife into the wooden steps when he talked. Then he reached down and pick it up quick, again.

With every word I was trying to pound into Mingo, I was smashing my fist on that post beside me. "Mingo, when you was up North, my brother brought two guys here to visit when he was home on furlough—two gabachos. They sat right at our table and ate *enchiladas* and *menudo*. Right in there at that table they sat and ate with us. Those guys and Alex are like

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brothers—you know it. He's the only Mexican in his crew flying over Germany, but they're all like brothers. We got their pictures on our table. They're like brothers, I tell you. You gotta listen. You gotta go with me to the station in the morning. You gotta go."

Then he give me a long long look. "Oh, so you have to wear a goddamn uniform before you can be a brother to a man, is that it?"

There was nothing more I could tell him. Nothing was right this night. I just kept hitting that post till my fist was sore. But the hurt felt good—it was good, not like the other things I felt in my heart this night.

Suddenly Mingo jerked my hand away. "Save it. You'll need your hand later." He got up. "I gotta go. Maybe I'll meet you in the morning, maybe not. I'm going to take Rosie home and see who got hurt in Dogtown. Then I'll see about wearin' that Army zootsuit, in the paratroopers."

He called Rosie from the house and they went out the gate. I tell him, "Be careful with that knife, Geronimo."

He laughs and takes Rosie's arm. "This is a democracy. I have to defend myself, don't I?"

I sat there a long time on the steps. The people were still on the corners, watching and crying and talking. Standing behind their little fences, they were waiting. Inside my house it was quiet and

dark. Old Pedro Ramirez who drives the water wagon came by sprinkling down the night streets. He stopped and called me, "What's the matter, Danny? What's the matter? What have they done? This is wrong—this is wrong." Old Pedro was worried and kept shaking his head while he drove that crate down the street.

Across the road the house was wide open and the radio banged out some Mexican music. I wondered about Mingo, about Jessie, about me—about all of us. You know, if you take time out to think what it is all about, say take a little retreat into your mind—well, if you do that you know something. You know that in the future, in the flow of time, we have to bring knowledge into the heads of our children, and beauty into their hearts. Then this sickness won't happen. These riots won't occur.

My drink was gone, Mingo was gone, the sailors were gone. It was quiet now. Quiet on our street. But far off downtown the sirens were still coming through the night.

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*This is another of the stories about young Mexican Americans by Beatrice Griffith which have been appearing in COMMON GROUND. They will be part of her Houghton Mifflin Fellowship book, American Me, to be published this Fall.*

*The sketches are by Alan Woods, a West Coast artist who is illustrating Miss Griffith's book.*

## COLOR BLIND

RALPH FRIEDMAN

WANT to see democracy in action? Come with me to my union hall.

We are at 86 Commercial Street, the San Francisco branch of the National Union of Marine Cooks and Stewards. It is a sunny morning, and outside the hall a loose-knotted group of seamen are battling the breeze.

Nothing unusual about men on a sidewalk carrying on a friendly conversation. But these men are Negroes, Hawaiians, Chinese, Japanese, Filipinos, Puerto Ricans, Frenchmen, Italians, as well as native "Americans" of "Duke's mixture" variety.

No discrimination or paternalism among these men. They ducked torpedoes during the war together (and sometimes the torpedoes struck home), and they've shared crowded foc'sles on passenger ships and freighters for long months at a time. (A lot of deep blue water has equalized the color of seamen.)

Let's go inside and meet some of the officers. Here's Hugh Bryson, president of the National Union. He's a tall good-looking young fellow who started life as a farmer's son in central Illinois. Hugh can't remember when he first started fighting discrimination, but he's doing a good job of it now. He rarely discusses national, local, or shipping problems without taking a crack at racial and religious prejudice.

Nathan Jacobson, secretary-treasurer of the national union, is a Jewish lad from Brooklyn (or some part of New York Brooklyn has annexed), and he has sailed the seas for one third of his young life.

Jacobson, like Bryson and the local officials, is accessible to any member at any time during office hours, and very often their home phones are busy with the two-way traffic of problems and solutions.

It is not uncommon for a seaman who has gone broke while waiting for a job to borrow a few dollars from his union brothers, and guys like "Jake," who have experienced every phase in the ups-and-downs of a seafarer's life, are always good for a touch.

Let's find the Port Agent. He's a pretty busy Joe, with his hands full of problems. But here he is, standing still for a minute. He's Henry Fischer, of Swiss ancestry, a man who has sailed almost every type of commercial vessel in his twelve years of seagoing. "I'm color blind," he says. "I got no time for foolishness." But he has time for exposing the dangers of prejudice. "If we start hating each other or refusing to work with each other, we will become disunited. Disunited, we lose our union. Unity built our union. We won't let disunity destroy it."

While we're in the front office we have a chance to meet the Patrolmen. They're the fellows who go out to meet the ships, talk things over with the crew, investigate grievances, handle all "beefs."

There are three Patrolmen: Harry Nehrebecki, Leonard Cowan, and Joe Johnson. Miles apart in temperament and approach from each other, they reflect the composition of the membership.

Harry Nehrebecki is steady, patient, unhurried, taciturn, and moody, square-jawed and square-shouldered. He is of Slavic

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ancestry and comes from the farmland hills of Pennsylvania. He is best known for his "even keel" demeanor—no one has ever seen him riled—and for his zealous impartiality. When his brother, also a seaman, was "on the beach" or unemployed, he casually asked Harry if any jobs might be coming up soon. Patrolman Nehrebecki replied, "This union operates on a basis of rotary hiring. That means everybody takes his turn."

Leonard Cowan, a light-skinned Negro, is suave, diplomatic, and the most scholarly looking of the officials. With his brief case and a slightly absent-minded expression he constantly carries with him, he can easily be mistaken for a college professor or insurance executive instead of the representative of some of the saltiest-tongued men in the nation.

The third Patrolman is probably the most popular of all union officials. He is Joe Johnson, a solid, round-faced, handsome Negro with sparkling eyes and an infectious smile. He is alert, emotional, enthusiastic, fervent in his arguments, bristling with purple epithets when angry, wise-cracking with subtle sweetness when relaxed. He has a magnetic personality that draws people to him, even those white newcomers in the union who have not yet become immunized against discrimination.

Recently a letter appeared in the union's paper, signed by men of several colors and national origins, asking that Joe Johnson be chosen, in the coming elections, to any office for which he might aspire. Instances of this kind are so rare that they can only attest to the man's winsomeness, his untiring efforts for the seamen, and the democratic composition and attitude of the union membership.

Before we meet the last of the San Francisco branch officials, let's look around the hall. The secretaries are white,

Oriental, and Negro, and positions are assigned on the basis of skill only. And as evidence that the union believes women have ability to be more than office help, Peggy Gabbert is editing the union paper.

There's a trial being held in the library to determine if a seaman has, by his actions aboard ship, brought the union into ill repute. The trial committee is mixed, too. It was picked by a very simple and extremely fair process. The shipping cards of all members attending the last previous meeting were placed in a metal box, shaken up, and seven cards drawn. The first five names were automatically chosen to serve on the trial committee. The sixth and seventh were selected as alternates.

It's a few minutes before the hour, and the men are filling the hall. There is serious unemployment in the industry, and hundreds of union members are "on the beach" in San Francisco alone. They are waiting for a job for which they are qualified and for which they have seniority.

Out of the hiring hall office comes a short, well-knit, frowning Chinese American. (Beneath his disturbed mien is the easiest touch in the hall.) He mounts the platform in the center of the hall and writes on a giant blackboard the jobs that have come in during the last hour. As hundreds of black, brown, tan, yellow, and white men—from every state and scores of countries—watch Wally Hoe, the dispatcher, write, we lift our eyes and read these words, blocked above the blackboard:

"Rotary hiring means equality of work regardless of race, religious or political opinions."

*In the Army during the war, Ralph Friedman is now a seaman, doing freelance writing on the side.*



# HUMAN RELATIONS AND WORLD SURVIVAL

BROCK CHISHOLM

THE WORLD is changing and changing fast. Our past is not a very pleasant picture. It has been very unsuccessful. The whole history of the human race is one of competitive survival, of fighting for security, possession, prestige, power, control of others. It has been a long history of multitudes of people guided and controlled in the interests of the neurotic necessities of the few. Always a power-hungry leader has cropped up who has demanded satisfaction of his own excessive and pathological necessities for power and importance. The human race, all over the world up to now, has been of such kind and has thought in such ways that it has been possible for neurotic leaders to gather about them multitudes of supporters who, in giving such support, also gave themselves some of the satisfactions which they too needed.

This is true of all past history. It is the mechanism which has made so much trouble in the world. Blind multitudes following a neurotic leader in the interests of his personal power and prestige have been typical in all history, in all parts of the world. It is not to be expected that in the future we will be able to rid the world of neurotics. There will always be people who will require excessive degrees of importance. But it should be possible to do something about the cannon fodder. It is not beyond the range of possibility that developments may occur in that area. While competitive survival has been the mechanism by which the human race has got along in the past, this

is not a truly adult mechanism. It is not the sort of thing that truly well-developed people need in order to get along together. Civilized people, in their own personal relationships, have given up such methods long ago. They tend to get along by agreement, compromise, mutual understanding, and a certain degree of acceptance about divergent attitudes. But, in mass, the human race has not yet learned to behave in this way.

It might seem that the soft spot, where an approach can be made to this problem, is in relation to the mass of people, who even now can be led in strange directions, toward socially damaging goals, by people who are not themselves capable of functioning in any logical or civilized way. It may be seen if we look at ourselves, because we are the kind of people I am talking about. We are the people who fight wars every 15 or 20 years—we have been doing that for centuries. Our thinking habits and our behavior patterns do not prevent us from fighting wars. Wars were not too important until recent years; people who fought wars did only relatively local damage. It was possible for whole races to fight other whole races with casualties amounting to only a few thousands or a few millions, but that situation is no longer present. The world has changed because the power of the human being to kill has changed. There is an old military saying that offense is always overtaken by defense. It is not true. Offense has reached the stage now where it can absolutely annihilate whole

populations, and no more efficient offense than total destruction can be expected. So it becomes necessary to re-examine the whole mechanism of competitive survival which has been the method of survival of the human race up to now. This whole pattern, relatively innocuous in the past, cannot be used any longer because now *warfare has become synonymous with suicide*.

We must look at our own development, at the kinds of people we are and have been and that our ancestors have been. We need to look at the process of developing from a child to maturity and at the status of a truly mature citizen of the world.

If we think in terms of small children we may see the beginning of this process. The small child functions in terms of his own feelings only. These are isolated in time and space. They are feelings without any terms of reference. Shortly, however, the child learns that he is a person having feelings, and this relates him to his surroundings. He begins to become oriented in space and in time. He discovers his immediate environment. He learns methods of influencing that environment so that he gets what he wants—in the interests, still, of his own feelings. Soon he discovers the members of his family. Later he discovers people outside his family; later still, the children with whom he plays; then the other children at school; and then the community. Some people never advance beyond this stage of perception—do not develop beyond their local community. They become useful citizens of that community, but they are not capable of developing a broader than local loyalty. A certain number of people, however, develop to a degree of national loyalty, so that they regard all the citizens of their country as entitled to all the benefits of their civilization without reservations. But there are many whose loyalty is still

bound to a class, group, sect, color, race, or religion, or who fail to accept people within their own national community who belong to some social classification other than their own. Obviously, this is a failure in development, resulting in a distorted person who has not matured even to the national level. Until recently this was comparatively satisfactory, but in the future it cannot continue to be. The world has shrunk now to a very small place. It is necessary now to have enough people in enough places who are true world citizens, who have developed loyalty to the whole human race, of which we are all a part, if we are to survive. It is not possible to do this except through the stage of complete national loyalty. Only a country which can count on enough of its citizens being truly nationally loyal and then—as a further stage in maturation—internationally loyal can carry on foreign relations adequate to prevent the kind of conflict that may otherwise in the future wipe out the human race.

In terms of time also there is a developmental process. The small child thinks only in terms of now and here. Soon he discovers tomorrow and yesterday, and, after a little, he is able to save up today for something he will want more tomorrow. Within a short time the normally developing child should be able to control his desires of today to gain something more important for himself in the future. By his early teens he should be functioning several years ahead; by the late teens, ten years ahead, projecting himself into his own future, so that he can see where he is going and what his effect on his environment will be. Full maturity appropriate to this stage of world development can be expected in the late twenties or early thirties, but it develops in very few people indeed. Maturity in the time field results in people

functioning in terms of several generations. The truly mature personality will be planning his course far into the future and will not be too seized with the importance of the immediacy of problems. These are of great concern to the younger group, and it is fit and sound that they should be, but mature people should be thinking in longer terms; and their ability to do so is a measure of the degree of success with which they have approached this moving goal of maturity.

It is quite clear that a hundred years ago maturity in individuals did not require this high standard. It did not matter very much then if local groups, or even large groups, fought each other. But from now on, it does; the requirements of the civilized human being have been raised very greatly. These requirements show themselves in a great variety of directions, primarily in personal and voluntary responsibility to a social structure and social goals. The small child learns his relationship with his environment not primarily by what he hears, not by what he is taught at school, but by the day-to-day picture that is shown him by his father and his mother. These are the pictures into which he grows. He does not decide to be this or the other when he is a small child. He grows into the picture presented to him by his parents. That picture will always be deeply set into his personality. This is very firmly constructed by the end of the sixth or eighth year—which is not to say that nothing can be done about people after they are eight years old!—but the basic structure of the personality is firmly established by that age. The conscience has been almost entirely completed by that time. It is of the greatest importance to the world that the conscience of the next generation should be vastly different from that of this generation. Unless the consciences of the next generation, in enough places, in-

clude higher degrees of responsibility to the human race than have been found in ours, there will be no generation following that. I think we must accept these facts because they are facts and we must consider now, before we make more and perhaps irreparable mistakes, what we must do about them.

It may be painful for us to recognize that our first responsibility in relation to the world of the future is to see that our children do not grow up to be as we have been, to see that they are great improvements on the models we have shown them. We are the people who have fought each other every fifteen or twenty years for centuries, and always for reasons of power, prestige, and possessions. This is a pattern which our children cannot follow if there is to be any further development in this great developmental process of which the human race is a part. We must accept our responsibility to the next generation, and it is a long-term job we have before us. The kind of people the next generation will be is our responsibility.

Then there is, of course, the problem of the immediacy of the present chaotic state of the world. Many of these conditions are being exaggerated; there is not by any means a condition of chaos throughout the world. It is the disagreements that get all the publicity. Yet the United Nations itself has reached conclusions and agreements on at least fifty questions to every one that has not been agreed upon. An example is the Interim Commission of the World Health Organization. On that Commission are 18 nations representing all the 63 nations who signed the Constitution. These 18 representatives have met together repeatedly, have held long sessions, have tackled extraordinarily difficult problems, highly controversial in nature, and have reached agreed conclusions time after time. They

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have never taken a vote on a technical subject. Indeed, in several sessions of two weeks' duration, agreement has been reached on every subject without recourse to a single vote. The Interim Commission includes the United States and the U.S.S.R. and the United Kingdom and India and China and France and Canada and the Netherlands and Australia and Brazil and Egypt and Liberia and Mexico and Norway and Peru and the Ukraine and Venezuela and Yugoslavia. Here is a demonstration of successful human relations before our very noses that no one is looking at. Here is the proof that it can be done. I say to you in all seriousness that there has been no time in the deliberations of the Interim Commission when one could tell from what they said what country the representatives of the U.S.S.R. came from. They are responsible representatives of the whole 63 nations; they are interested in the health of the world. Their attitude is truly a world attitude. This is fact. It is true that in other areas there is much controversy and great difficulty. It is perfectly true that there are fundamental disagreements about life patterns between people in the different parts of the world.

It is just as true that the people of India, as one of many examples, have vastly different patterns of life from ours, but they are not aggressive and no one outside their own country is afraid of them.

A new factor has come along that really has changed the world, has changed it more than the atomic bomb, and that is biological warfare. Biological warfare renders the atomic bomb child's-play. Its potentialities for destruction are vastly greater than those of the bomb. It requires no heavy industries, no manpower, no industrial development, and very little technical knowledge. This is a fact. It is a fact which permits any small country

which becomes belligerent equality with any other country of the world. All that is necessary are a few technicians and a few fanatic distributors.

Our whole concept of competitive survival is obsolete. We have no alternative to collective suicide but getting along with each other. It is important that we recognize this fact now, before it is too late. We must live, if we are to live at all, with all the people in the world. This necessity will be a great test of our social abilities, the abilities we must develop quickly to survive under these changed circumstances. Many other forms of life on earth have not survived because they were incapable of adjusting to new circumstances. It is possible that man too will go the way of the dinosaur if he cannot make an appropriate adjustment to the new world in which he finds himself. This is the dismal prospect if we retain all our present concepts and behavior patterns. But if we are willing to start afresh, to recognize that our human relations, and those of the whole race, have not been successful so far, that we are not the people who will inherit the earth, we may have some hope for the future.

This requires drastic re-evaluation. We must consider our responsibility as citizens in relation to other nations. No government can outdistance its people; any government in any international council can only represent its people; any government which can hope to maintain such foreign relations as will entitle the race to survive must be able to count on a citizenry which has developed a degree of maturity which makes it fit to live with a great variety of people throughout the world. We have not yet attained that standard. We have duties in this regard to ourselves, to our children, to our nations, and to the world.

We have not always taken these responsibilities very seriously. There are

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still people to be found in international conferences, negotiating vastly important matters with representatives of other countries without having studied the history, philosophy, or even the religion of the people with whom they are negotiating. This is, of course, a fantastically ridiculous situation. It is impossible effectively to discuss anything with widely divergent people if you do not know their basic philosophy, history, etc.; but these basic facts have not yet been widely accepted as standards among the people who represent us in the councils of the nations.

Our lives are in the hands of these people. Their failure in human relations is what makes wars. It is no longer safe to elect anyone to a position of social responsibility on the score of local issues. The only really paramount issue in the future in every election in every community in every country in the world is

the survival of the human race. Nothing else is of importance beside that great necessity. In every country it behooves the citizenry to consider the people they would elect to any office in terms of their fitness to help the human race to survive. This is the world situation with which our educational process should equip our children to deal. We must give up much of our concern for our own little comforts and importance. We must assume a higher citizenship and wider values. Only so can we hope to survive.

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*This was an address by Dr. Brock Chisholm at the 100th anniversary dinner of the Community Service Society of New York in April of 1948. Dr. Chisholm is the eminent Canadian psychiatrist, now Director General of the World Health Organization of the United Nations.*

## A FEW LITTLE WORDS

FRANCIS STEEGMULLER

Mrs. SLOAN, the resident manager—or “manageress,” as she liked to call herself in English style—of the building in which the Farnhams were about to buy an apartment, was very cordial as she opened her door in response to Mrs. Farnham’s ring, but it was clear that there was something special on her mind. Mrs. Farnham had thought there was from the tone of voice in which she had asked her on the telephone earlier that morning whether she might see her for a moment during the day. “Of course,” Mrs. Farnham had answered. “I’m visiting my sister-in-law this morning, and I’ll just drop

in on you on my way upstairs. She and I want to do a little measuring for curtains and things in my apartment.” Mrs. Sloan had said that would be perfect, and now she gestured for her guest—or customer—to sit down on her sofa, remarked on the beauty of the day, and cleared her throat.

Mrs. Farnham thought she knew what was coming, and as she waited for it she gazed around Mrs. Sloan’s living room. She had been in it several times lately, during the negotiations for the apartment she and her husband were acquiring, and each time she had reflected on how eloquent some of its aspects were of a

person who had, as the old phrase went, "come down in the world." A few handsome pieces of old furniture, a couple of massively framed family portraits (very early Victorian in period), the Social Register next to the telephone—and through the window a heavy sound of traffic to remind you that you were on the second floor, in the most undesirable apartment in the house, given to Mrs. Sloan by the directors as part of her salary for managing the co-operative.

"I don't have to tell you again how glad we all are that you and Mr. Farnham are joining us here," Mrs. Sloan was saying. "When the directors decided to put on the campaign to make the building one-hundred-per-cent co-operative, we naturally hoped we'd be able to attract people who were connected with people we already knew and liked. It was so nice having Mrs. Whipple tell us about you and you about us. We're all very fond of Mrs. Whipple. She's been such a charming tenant always—we hope that she may buy too, eventually."

Mrs. Farnham nodded in response to the tribute to her sister-in-law. "I've always been candid with you about our coming, Mrs. Sloan," she said. "As I've told you, the price of the apartment—I know it wasn't you who set it—seems to us terribly high, and we dislike to have to buy at all. But with my husband's heart keeping him at home so much we're glad of this opportunity to move here where he can be so close to his sister. The four of us are good friends, and we're grateful to you for letting Mrs. Whipple know when the apartment became available. It's certainly going to be a relief to get out of that noisy hotel."

"I appreciate your candor," Mrs. Sloan said. "Don't think I don't. I only hope you won't think I'm being too candid myself when I go on to say what I have to."

Once again Mrs. Farnham let her gaze

travel around the living room: yes, this was certainly going to be what she had expected.

"Now that the directors' lawyers have gone over all the figures and things with yours," said Mrs. Sloan, "you probably know about the heavy mortgage on the building and this opportunity the mortgage holder has given us of avoiding foreclosure by selling apartments and applying their purchase price to reduce the principal. That's the explanation of the prices we're asking. We're perfectly frank about it. And since that's the situation, you can see that my chief job here is to sell apartments. If apartments aren't sold, the mortgage holder will foreclose, the original investors in the building will lose their investment (you won't—your lawyer has probably explained the way new buyers are insured against that), and I'll be out of a job, because the new owners will probably put in a new manager of their own. So both for the directors' sake and for my own it's up to me to sell apartments and do everything I can to keep this a desirable house. I'm not sure you realize how frightfully candid I'm being."

Mrs. Farnham wasn't sure that she did either: Mrs. Sloan seemed to be choosing a rather roundabout way of approaching her point. But her next words took her pretty close to it.

"As you know," she said, "there is nothing—*nothing*—that causes real estate values to go down more quickly than any question of Negro tenancy, or even any hint or rumor of Negro tenancy. That is fatal to a building—absolutely fatal."

"I know," said Mrs. Farnham. "But I don't imagine there's any question of that here, is there?"

"Naturally not. But I think you must know what I have in mind, Mrs. Farnham. Those few little words you said to me yesterday about your having Negro business associates of some kind."



"No, I didn't say that, exactly," Mrs. Farnham corrected. "What I told you was that I had several Negro friends."

"Friends, then. And you said that you would expect them to be received as courteously and unquestioningly in the lobby and in the elevator as anyone else. I said naturally they would be. But I've been thinking about the matter, Mrs. Farnham, and it worries me. You see. . . ."

"Under ordinary circumstances," Mrs. Farnham interrupted, "I would have assumed that they would be so received, and wouldn't have thought of bringing up the question. But it just happened that the other day a friend of mine a few houses down the avenue from here had some ladies to tea—ladies she was trying to interest in a school for Negro boys she contributes to. She had the principal of the school in, too, and he had quite a disagreeable experience on his way up in the elevator. So it's been on my mind lately, and I thought I'd better mention it."

"I'm very glad you did," said Mrs. Sloan. "Actually, the law covers cases like that, you know. It would be the same in this house. Once you were a tenant or an owner here you would be legally entitled to receive anyone you wished. But also the directors of a co-operative apartment house are legally entitled to reject the application of anyone they wish, without giving a reason. So you can see that I appreciate your bringing up the matter now, before your papers have actually been put through. Because I'm frankly worried: if Negroes were to be seen coming in and out of here, the rumor might very well spread that they were tenants, and that would be the end. Have you many Negro friends, Mrs. Farnham?"

Mrs. Farnham hesitated. It wasn't a question she had to answer, of course. It wasn't one that should have been asked. But suddenly there came over her the

thought of how pitifully few she knew out of the immense number of educated Negroes in her own country, or even in her own city. Barely half a dozen: a singer and his wife, a teacher in one of the city colleges, a social worker—just a few pleasant people with whom in one way or another she and her husband had come to be friends. And even that number, she knew, was larger than the number known by almost any of her other friends. She was overwhelmed, as she sat there, by a sudden sense of gigantic social impoverishment. "Mr. Farnham and I know very few Negroes at present," she said. "But we consider that our misfortune. We hope we may know more, as time goes on."

Mrs. Sloan kept her face immobile. "In that case," she said, "I think you will understand when I say that I feel it my duty to raise the question with the directors, and see how they feel. I will not pass on the question—they will. And I will let you know their decision as soon as I can."

"I wish you would," said Mrs. Farnham, feeling herself tremble a little as she stood up. "And now I think I'll go upstairs."

Mrs. Sloan accompanied her to the door, but she didn't open it at once. "Really, Mrs. Farnham," she said, in an urging, confidential tone, "I assure you I have no prejudice myself—as a girl in Boston I scandalized the aunt who brought me up by going around with Catholic girls—but how important is it to you, actually, to receive those particular friends here? The law protects them now in restaurants and other public places. Wouldn't it be preferable, since it means so much to Mr. Farnham to be near his sister, and since you both like the apartment so much, to entertain such people. . . ."

"It is completely important to me, of course," said Mrs. Farnham, hoping that her trembling was not apparent. "Com-

pletely and utterly important. I am surprised that I should have to tell you so."

"In that case, then, will you follow my advice? For your own good, will you withdraw your application? It would be the best thing. It would have been approved automatically, on my recommendation, at the meeting tonight, if it hadn't been for those few words of yours yesterday. But now I think I know what the decision of the directors will be, and I don't like to embarrass anyone whom we like as much as we do you."

"Embarrass me?" Through the doorway of Mrs. Sloan's foyer, Mrs. Farnham caught a glimpse of one of the pre-Civil War portraits and the Social Register on the telephone table. "Embarrass me? Indeed I'm very much of the opinion that it's you who should be. . . ." But she did not finish her sentence, for it was clear that there was not, in the descendant of the ancestors in the portraits, the slightest tendency to be embarrassed over this purely business matter. "Just put my application through in the usual way," Mrs. Farnham ended, firmly, "and let my lawyer know what the result is. Good morning."

The manageress bade her good morning and let her out into the hall, and she rang for the elevator. She stepped into it when it came, and then, upstairs, rang her sister-in-law's doorbell. From within Mrs. Whipple cheerfully called, "Come in!" and inside Mrs. Farnham found her ready for work, wearing an apron and armed with a yardstick and tape measure. There was a chair in the foyer, and Mrs. Farnham surprised herself by the heaviness with which she sank onto it, and by the tears which began at once to flow.

"Why, Milly!" said her sister-in-law. "What in the world. . . ?"

"You can put those things away," Mrs. Farnham answered, ashamed of the sobs that insisted on coming between her words. "Put them away, and bring me a drink of some kind. Rather quickly, if you can."

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*Francis Steegmuller is the author of Flaubert and Madame Bovary, of a novel, States of Grace, and of numerous short stories which have appeared in The New Yorker.*

## I WRITE OF WASHINGTON

LESLIE JOHNSTON

I LIVE in Washington, the capital city of the United States of America. I am an Englishman, and I am a Quaker. I work in surroundings that bring me into daily and intimate contact with men and women from all over the world, and from all backgrounds of race, color, and creed. I feel strongly moved to write of Washington not as the seat of govern-

ment, nor of Washington as the location of the embassies of all the nations of the world, nor of Washington as one of the most beautiful cities in the world; but of two other Washingtons—one of which exists, the other a Washington that might be.

The first of these Washingtons has been written of many times. It has been

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written of by Richard Wright even when the locale of his stories has been some town in the Deep South; it has been written of by Lillian Smith; it has been described in the report of the President's Committee on Civil Rights; it has been written of whenever man or woman has told of conditions in which the brotherhood of man under God has been denied. For the brotherhood of man is denied in this city which is the seat of government of what has been called the world's greatest democracy; and, because the fundamental philosophy underlying the Constitution of this democracy rests on the conception of brotherhood and equality, that Constitution is also denied here in the nation's capital.

These things have been said and written so many times that I know that one more small voice can, perhaps, make little difference, may even serve only to irritate; but the situation strikes hard at a man of goodwill at so many points that he feels he is being stifled, that he must cry out, even if it is only the cry of frustration. For it is in the small everyday things of ordinary living that the great denial makes itself felt. Just a few hours before sitting down to write these words I was chairman of a discussion group at which our guest speaker was a cultured gentleman who is a philosopher of world fame. He is a graduate of Harvard, a former Rhodes Scholar, and one who studied as a postgraduate student at the University of Berlin. Yet he is a man who could not obtain a meal at any white-owned restaurant in Washington except for the ywca cafeteria and the restaurant at the Union Station. He could not go to any downtown movie theater except the burlesque house; he could not see the fine Italian film which at present is being shown at one of the "art" theaters, and the very theme of which is the brotherhood of man, and in which one of

the main characters is a Negro soldier who fraternizes with a white man. Perhaps it is not important that anyone should ever go to a movie, but the reason why this man cannot go to certain theaters in Washington is important. Can any of us know what indignities and insults this educated gentleman must have had to bear? Can any of us imagine them and not be ashamed? And he is only one of millions who are open to daily insult.

Because of my work with people of all nationalities and races, I have been led at different times to talk to restaurant owners and theater managers in an effort to find restaurants and theaters where all my friends and associates might go, not only the Americans of Negro ancestry but also my colleagues from Haiti and Panama and Africa. One restaurant owner told me that he would serve Indians and Chinese but would not serve "colored" people. Were not Indians and Chinese generally considered colored, I asked. Not at all, I was told: they have been "officially recognized as members of the white race." A theater manager told me that he could not carry enough insurance to guard himself against possible riots if he were to open his doors to American citizens of color. This was a new excuse, at least to me. Generally I had heard that non-discrimination would result in loss of business, or that it would violate the accepted "pattern" (it is always assumed that it is accepted by Negroes, too). This pattern we often hear about. It is a pattern which causes one legitimate theater to refuse to have Negroes in the audience but to allow them on the stage as performers, another to allow them in the audience but not on the stage, and a third (belonging to an institution of higher learning) to allow them neither on the stage nor in the audience. What sort of pattern is this, except a pattern of the denial of basic

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humanity and the Bill of Rights? Nevertheless it is accepted by restaurants, theaters, professional associations, schools, even churches.

And what a Washington there might be! Removal of the artificially created barriers between the free meeting and association of all American citizens in this nation's capital would have such an effect as can scarcely be imagined. The creation in this lovely city of a community of men really accepting as true the concepts of common humanity and brotherhood would stand as a more significant proof than any other single action of American belief in democracy, would release such a tide of creative goodwill as we have seldom seen in this country.

I have said that I write as an Englishman and as a Quaker. I realize my temerity. I know how guilty the English are, but the faults and failures of one people are no excuse for similar mistakes on the part of others. And I live in this city, and I like much of it; and because I like much of it I want to like it all. I want it to be unnecessary for me to have to try to mend, in my own poor way, the jarred nerves and deep wounds of insult of my Haitian and African friends when they meet the "pattern" of discrimination for the first time. It is not easy then for an Englishman (is it for an American?) to explain, in terms of American democracy of which they have heard so much, the actual indignities which they have

just experienced—indignities that are the daily experience of millions of American citizens. As a Quaker I feel ashamed, guilty, and impotent, when I know that the school to which my own son goes, and which bears the name of "Friends," is one to which no "colored" American child has been admitted.

My Washington that might be would have as part of its early history the ending of discrimination in the Friends' school; it would be a Washington in which first the "art" theaters and then the larger houses would open their doors to all; it would be a Washington in which the President of Howard University would be invited by the Cosmos Club to be its first Negro member. From these beginnings could we not look forward to the growth of a city where American citizens could meet and mix freely on a basis of equal opportunity and friendship without the barriers of prejudice and hate and fear? From these beginnings might grow a city not to like but one to love.

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# MONUMENT OF, FOR, AND BY THE LIVING

ISABEL CURRIER

A GENTLE genius in human relations died in Boston in the spring of this year. His name was Constantine Aristides Gazulis. His friends all called him Gus. He was a young man, and he had remained poor and obscure by choice. But the legacy he left was far-reaching—a monument of, for, and by the living, which, characteristically, Gus himself had founded to honor the memory of someone else. As Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., author of *The Age of Jackson*, expressed it in *The Boston Globe*: “Gus has set an example of civic patriotism for us all.”

Constantine Gazulis was the founder, director, brains, and guiding spirit of the Frances Sweeney Committee of Boston. The story of the Frances Sweeney Committee is, therefore, the story of its creator. The story of Gus Gazulis is also the story of Frances Sweeney although, while Gus was alive, he always said: “Leave me out of it. If a guy stops to take pats on the back, he’s liable to forget where he’s heading.” Despite his modesty and the carefully guarded anonymity of his work, Gus’ lifelong battle against prejudice inspired Rudolph Elie to write, on the editorial page of *The Boston Herald*: “Gus was the most passionate American that any of us ever knew.”

The Frances Sweeney Committee was Gus Gazulis’ lifework and the overtaking cause of his untimely death, as it had been to its namesake. An affiliate of the Friends of Democracy, Inc., but completely autonomous in its informal scheme of operation, the Frances Sweeney Com-

mittee is a citizens’ action group to combat prejudice that is unique in the United States. Its uniqueness is, first, that its operations reflect the two key personalities behind it: Frances Sweeney and Constantine Gazulis. Second, its full-time work was, for five years, the voluntary gift of plain citizens with no personal axes to grind, who had to earn their living through other pursuits. Third, it is a small, mobile, and closed committee, which never sought either membership or publicity. (It is closed to keep out extremists of either the right or the left; it is unpublicized because its aims are to help in building a more peaceful democracy, not to further personal ambitions.) Fourth, the field of operations of the Frances Sweeney Committee always has emphasized the political aspects of prejudice, while remaining non-partisan. Comprised of people who never have been and never wish to be in political life, it rushes in where the expedient hesitate to tread to fulfill its function as a watchdog of democracy in operation.

The Frances Sweeney Committee is so effective a group that John Roy Carlson cited it in *The Plotters* as a model to serve other citizens who want to do something against racial and religious prejudice. It is so valuable an information center that, in writing both his books, Carlson based his studies of Boston upon its researches and co-operation. So did Henry Hoke in writing *Black Mail*; Wallace Stegner in compiling *One Nation*; Kenneth Stewart in presenting *News Is What We Make It*;

Selden Menefee in his *Assignment: USA*. Other writers of dozens of articles on racial tensions have drawn much of their information from the files of the Committee. (These are Gus Gazulis' personal files, begun when he was an undergraduate at the University of Michigan compiling material for a thesis, and continued ever since, both as a career and as field work toward a graduate degree.) The group is so lively a local influence that Mildred H. Mahoney, chairman of the Massachusetts FEPC Commission and former secretary of The Massachusetts Governor's Committee for Racial and Religious Understanding, has publicly stated time and again: "The Frances Sweeney Committee has been of the greatest possible help to me in my work, both with the Governor's Committee and as chairman of FEPC. It is one of the most dynamic and socially creative groups I've ever encountered."

The dynamic creativeness of the Frances Sweeney Committee are endowments bestowed upon it by Frances Sweeney and Gus Gazulis who, oddly and dramatically, are partners of circumstance in death, as they were in life. Constantine Gazulis and Frances Sweeney had been fighting political prejudice independently when they met each other for the first time in 1941.

Both were natives of Boston. Gus was the son, and only child, of Greek Americans who had found their means of livelihood in the restaurant business. Frances was the only child of an Irish American saloonkeeper. Both were physically frail as a result of the identical childhood disease: an attack of rheumatic fever early in life had left each with a serious heart condition. During their long illnesses each had developed a precocious interest in the sicknesses of society and a burning desire to devote their individual sparks of life to making the great objective

human patient more comfortable. Both, through the accident of having been born into the Greek and the Irish Catholic minorities respectively, had felt the personal sting of blind prejudice.

When Gus Gazulis was graduated from the University of Michigan, his thesis was an amazing document of original research on the threat to society of racial and religious prejudice. He lingered at his Alma Mater for two years as an instructor in sociology. But his health was precarious and his hunger for life was acute. He wanted to be on the battleground of warring social forces so that he could sop up all there was to learn about them through his skin. In later years, he hoped, he might resume classroom teaching with a background of wide experience in social action. He had been a top research man in his field, and his file on racial and religious prejudice already was notable. Although he was the type of intellectual who preferred to talk out of the side of his mouth in man-of-the-street language and to keep his own personality and talents in the background, he continued—while working in New York as a public relations man for the cio—to pursue his researches with a scholar's exact methods. His file on American subversive and prejudicial programs and personalities continued to grow; it is the best of its kind in New England. Probably, with the exception of that maintained by the Friends of Democracy, it is the most complete in the United States. Dr. Leon M. Birkhead, founder of the Friends of Democracy, says: "Gus' knowledge of the people and the forces throughout the country which are the real threat to democracy was almost omniscient."

His file was compiled by subscribing to and clipping not only such key periodicals as the New York Times and other big city publications, with special emphasis on all those published in Boston, but the dailies



and the weeklies and monthlies and quarterlies and obscure pamphlets published by professional and amateur haters. It was an enormous task, a daily grind with which few people could help him, because his method of spotting and selecting what to clip relied, in part, on his phenomenal memory for names, faces, photographs, and long-forgotten events. A down-the-center, small-d democrat, Gus was distrustful of both the extreme right and the extreme left. He never questioned anyone's right to believe what he chose in a democracy. "It isn't what people say that counts," he used to explain. "It's why they say it and who's behind it. They can believe anything they want, if they don't try to get people who don't understand to do their dirty work." Gus' opinions were never formed by hearsay. They were always the result of his intensive personal study and analysis of the very forces he feared and opposed. People who saw Gus read every line in the *Daily Worker* for over 15 years sometimes said: "That tall Greek is a Communist." Many never understood what he meant when he said: "I read this religiously because I don't believe in it."

In 1939, physically unfit though he was, he returned to his home in Boston to offer himself for whatever service he could render in the looming war. As an independent investigator, whose researches were turned over to such agencies as the FBI, and the military intelligence services when they had a subversive tinge, he was always to be seen at meetings of the so-called "Christian" Front, the Silver Shirts, and related undemocratic groups.

At such a meeting in 1941, Frances Sweeney created a disturbance by heckling the anti-Semitic propaganda of the speakers. She was evicted from the hall. Constantine Gazulis immediately tore out after her to make himself known as a kindred spirit. That was the beginning of

a constructive partnership in good citizenship that is, in part, directly responsible for Boston's present status as one of the healthiest cities in the United States in intergroup relations. At that time and until 1944, Boston was reckoned as second only to Detroit in its dangerous intergroup tensions, with emphasis on acute anti-Semitism.

Frances Sweeney had leaped, so to speak, from an invalid's bed into a one-woman crusade against anti-Semitism in her city. During her sick childhood and youth she had been an eager follower of her father's behind-the-scenes political interests. Her father taught her to be a hungry consumer of newspapers and political writings; expounded to her the glories of democracy still to be realized; and gossiped freely about who was who—how and why—in the local political scene. Frances had a card-index mind in which she stored away a phenomenal amount of information. Rather late in life she was able to attend school and to be graduated from St. Joseph's Academy. After her father's death she needed a job—one not too taxing to her strength—and she found one as secretary of the American-Irish Defense Association.

Her work for that organization consisted in arranging only one meeting, which chanced to be scheduled for the memorable date of December 7, 1941. Instead of the American-Irish patriots whom she had expected at the meeting, the audience of about 100 consisted almost entirely of people friendly to the "Christian" Front. Hysterical with the news of Pearl Harbor, they heckled the speakers with threats against "the international Jews, who have gotten us into war"; against "President Rosenfeldt, the tool of the international Jews." Frances Sweeney tried to quiet the heckling with an unprepared warning against pro-Nazi propaganda and an expression of faith in

our democratic leadership. The audience rose as one man and walked out of the meeting, leaving Frances, as she used to say, "with my Irish so far up it never can come down."

Frances Sweeney had the audacity of the born leader where Gus Gazulis had the diffidence of the creative scholar. She rushed headlong into any situation where she saw a need for action; Gus analyzed a situation first, with all the facts available in hand, with the patience of an experienced strategist. Frances never became a sophisticated person; her invalid childhood had been too sheltered. In her simplicity she believed that a handful of people of her own Irish background who hated the Jews had challenged her personally to right their wrongs. Gus had "batted around" and had found objectivity without cynicism. In his long-range view, society could heal itself of cancerous hatred only from within, by means of a concerted health program conducted by all groups. Both Frances and Gus had the singleness of mind (fanaticism, if you like) of the physically frail who had dedicated themselves to constructive living without scattering of strength. So they pooled their talents: Frances Sweeney, the firebrand with a tempestuous gift for making other people burst into flaming indignation; Constantine Gazulis, the quiet, self-effacing field worker with a genius for analysis and strategy behind the scenes.

They had no money of their own and, at first, no financial backing. Frances was a gifted writer; she turned the gift to profit by doing part-time work for an advertising agency. Gus also earned his living in public relations; he was retained at a small, regular salary by the Greek Consulate; he organized and publicized spot news events, such as Greek American drives and dinners. When they had a few dollars between them to pay for the

mimeographing, Frances wrote an issue of her pamphlet, the Boston City Reporter in which, as Leo Cherne once expressed it, she functioned "as both catechist and goad." The Boston City Reporter goaded the police, political officeholders, the press, and the public to take action against multiplying instances of acute anti-Semitism which the regular press of Boston and all officialdom were ignoring at the request of Jewish community leaders, in a mistaken hush-hush policy of "least said, soonest mended."

With the aid of a friendly newspaperman, William G. Gavin, executive editor of the Boston Traveler, Frances and Gus acquired and furnished a cubbyhole of an office to contain Gus' files and Frances' personal dynamo of action. Mr. Gavin courageously used their material to launch an exposé of "Christian" Frontism in Boston as a subversive wartime movement, which forced ex-police Commissioner Joseph Timilty to order the Front to disband. The Rumor Clinic, an idea originating in Frances' and Gus' little office, was launched by Mr. Gavin in the Boston Herald, under the direction of Professor Gordon Allport, head of Harvard's Psychological Laboratory. The Rumor Clinic, widely publicized in the Reader's Digest and imitated in other cities throughout the country, traced lies disruptive to the war effort, anti-Semitic propaganda, and defeatist rumors to their sources to muffle them with the truth in print. It was due to Frances Sweeney's connection with the Rumor Clinic that reports of attacks against Jews, defilement of Jewish property, and public insults began to pour into her office. Gus, the well-trained investigator, did much of the amateur detective work in tracking down these reports. In so doing, he won a local reputation as a "man of mystery."

Gus was painfully aware that his striking personal appearance made him out-

standing in any crowd. He looked like a character in a Hitchcock movie: several inches over six feet tall, thin to the point of gauntness, and extraordinarily erect in carriage. A disreputable slouch hat was always pulled down over his inky black hair and lightning-quick black eyes. A black military moustache shadowed his generous, whimsical mouth. That part of his face, including the tip of his magnificent Greek nose, usually was tucked into the upturned collar of an ancient trench coat. He moved with such speed that it was a standing joke to say that Gus turned up everywhere and disappeared: "Now you see him, now you don't." He was incredibly reticent. Gus himself forgot who told him secrets. Many of his best friends never knew, for instance, until after his death, that Gus was a trained sociologist. He "gave out" with information only when it would be used for good. But his host of newspaper and radio-news friends, his constant associates in other intergroup agencies, called Gus when they wanted any information about the fascist-minded or communist-minded; what was going on in the city and what it might mean. They all said of him that Gus never was known to give a bum steer. He rarely talked, but, when he did, he knew precisely what he was talking about. Another joke was: "Gus never lets his right ear know what the left-hand corner of his mouth is saying."

Frances Sweeney, on the other hand, was as outpouring as she was swift in leaping to conclusions. She would—and did—walk up to Boston's most dignified official and tell him that, in her opinion, he didn't know his way around his own city, along with a recital of the reasons why. The reasons why—in the form of reports of anti-Semitic incidents pouring into the office where Gus and Frances labored—numbered 611 complaints from June 1943 to June 1944. (It was impos-

sible to investigate all of these complaints. Later investigation by the Governor's Committee concluded that actual outrages had been much less than that number.) But in Frances Sweeney's opinion, the Boston press, police, and political officeholders did nothing to indicate that anti-Semitism existed. Actually the police were handicapped by a war-reduced force; the press was restrained by the cautious judgment of Jewish leaders. It is a reflection of the over-all indifference of Boston at that time that few persons who were in a position to do so dared to publicize or to take action against the multiplying anti-Semitic beatings. It was considered so indelicate—as it still is in some circles—to defend minority groups against outrage that those citizens who did so were promptly labelled "reds" or "Communists" or "employees of the international Jews."

Many citizens, aside from Frances Sweeney and Constantine Gazulis, did their best to prop up the nearest corner of democracy to withstand the termites gnawing from within. Professor John J. Mahoney of Boston University began in 1923, after the First World War, to offer a course called "Education for Democracy," which showed teachers how to make "intergroup understanding, respect, and good will" a part of every subject taught to any grade or age of students from kindergarten through college.

At Harvard, Professor Gordon W. Allport's Psychological Laboratory analyzed the propaganda of hatred and the means of combatting it.

Citizens' organizations such as the Massachusetts Committee of Catholics, Protestants and Jews have attempted for 15 years to create goodwill by regular meetings on common ground of such distinguished people as Mr. Charles Francis Adams and such obscure ones as one of the John Joneses (colored), who

break bread together and support common enterprises for intergroup education and association. The Good Neighbor Association of Dorchester, Mattapan, and Hyde Park was also formed in these troubled times to give aid to the wronged and injured in the area where most of the anti-Semitic attacks took place.

But none of these efforts directly attacked acute anti-Semitism and called upon all citizens to combat it. And Boston had all seven of the dangerous conditions listed by Alfred McClung Lee in his pamphlet "Race Riots Aren't Necessary" as direct warnings of imminent race rioting: (1) insults and rumors against a group; (2) incidents of friction; (3) demagogic groups; (4) delinquency and crime; (5) police attitudes; (6) crowded housing and transportation; (7) employment conditions.

At that point, in the autumn of 1943, Constantine Gazulis decided that the time for laying the situation open to the public was immediate. "Tell the people the right score at the right time," he always said, "and they'll throw their weight on the side they want to win." Frances Sweeney carried out the strategy. She went to New York and asked the newspaper PM to print the story of 14 separate beatings of Jewish boys in Greater Boston, with affidavits.

The story was such a bombshell to most Bostonians that ex-Governor Leverett S. Saltonstall expressed the general reaction to it with his first comment: "It's a lie!" His first action was to order the reporter who had written the story out of his press conference, and to ask guards to escort him out of the State House. But, faced with the affidavits and the testimony of people who had been actively concerned with the problem, Mr. Saltonstall set the example for other citizens' honorable behavior. He invited the PM reporter, Arnold Beichman, back

to his press conference, publicly apologized for having called him a liar without having seen the evidence, and promised immediate action. Within three days he created the Governor's Committee for Racial and Religious Understanding (now merged with the FEPC Commission), which became the hub of a wheel of mobile democratic action. Its intergrooving work under Mildred H. Mahoney, in cooperation with 20 or 30 independent and specialized interracial groups, easily won the wholehearted assistance of the press and civil and state authorities including Boston's new Police Commissioner, Colonel Thomas F. Sullivan. The acute stage of Boston's anti-Semitism was cured in two short years. Massachusetts may thank the Governor's Committee for turning the tide of public sentiment so completely as to make the defense of persecuted minorities respectable, instead of the disreputable "leftist propaganda" it was previously supposed to be. And Massachusetts may thank Constantine Gazulis and Frances Sweeney, two average citizens born into minority groups, for bringing the Governor's Committee into being. The people learned the score and threw their weight on the right side with such force that the widest cross section of citizenry in Massachusetts' history turned out in public hearings to demand, and finally achieve, the Massachusetts FEPC Law in 1946. That year, in *The Plotters*, John Roy Carlson cited Boston as a model of "what an aroused community can do to fight prejudice in its own backyard."

The role played by Frances Sweeney and Gus Gazulis in lighting the fuse of public conscience brought other citizens forward to help them. Some had nothing but work to offer. Others dug down and contributed to maintaining the office and publishing the Boston City Reporter. In the new co-operative pattern set by the authoritative Governor's Committee, the

office of the Boston City Reporter became the information center for all intergroup organizations, thanks to Gus Gazulis' files. But Frances Sweeney never lived to see her free-lance efforts become an enormously valuable and integral part of community peace.

Frances had had many warnings that her damaged heart could not stand the intense pace of her round of meetings, speechmaking, and needling of authority. She shrugged the warnings away. "If I die, I'll die fighting, because if I don't fight I'll surely die." She succumbed to a heart attack in April of 1944 and fought her way back to health, as she supposed. But she died in her sleep on June 19 of 1944, at the age of 36, "as truly a war casualty," wrote Dr. Francis E. McMahon, "as any of the boys who died on the beaches of Normandy." Posthumously, the Bishop Sheil School for Social Service in Chicago awarded Frances Sweeney the Pope Leo XIII Medal for "outstanding service to society by a Catholic."

Frances and Gus both had the quality of magnets in attracting idealistic young people. Students from all colleges in Boston flocked to their office, and Gus, always the teacher, began their informal training in the urgent necessity for intergroup goodwill. His sure-fire method was to hand an interested person a folder of prejudicial writings and statements from his files and let the student form his own opinion as to the purpose and danger of such propaganda. Although I was an adult, Gus educated me in much the same way. Nothing is so staggering to one's sense of "all's right with the world" as an entire fat file filled, for instance, with clippings relating lynchings of Negroes in the South during the past few years. One may read about each—or all—of these events as they individually occur, but to see them *all* spread out in a packet

and to trace the pattern they portray cannot be other than a call to action.

Many of us were called to action by that taciturn method of summoning Gus had. And after Frances died we got together, in grief and bewilderment, to talk about what manner of memorial we could create for her out of the contributions that had poured in for that purpose. "Make it a living memorial," Gus urged. "Let's get on with the work."

So about a dozen of us sat down with Gus, his wife, and Dr. Leon M. Birkhead in 1944 and formed the Frances Sweeney Committee, an affiliate of the Friends of Democracy, with Gus as executive director (still unpaid) and Mary Fitzgerald, one of the talented, idealistic youngsters, as full-time secretary. We included a couple of businessmen, three industrialists, two lawyers, a teacher, two housewives, a physician, and a professional writer. We all gave what we had to give of time or training in winding up Frances' affairs, completing some unfinished projects she had started, making speeches, writing articles, helping with radio programs or co-operative community goodwill efforts.

But Constantine Gazulis and Mary Fitzgerald did the actual work—the enormous every day and every evening round of reading, clipping, filing, investigating, reporting, summarizing, analyzing. Since interracial relations are public relations on their most delicate and highly skilled plane, there are always press people, radio people, political people, police heads, to visit and consult; there are always meetings of friendly organizations to attend and secret meetings of unfriendly ones to cover as reporter. There are always legislative sessions to visit and legislative bills to work for or against. All day long the phone rings to report an outrage or to ask for information needed for a news story or for the use of another agency. All day long



the door opens to admit students (and sometimes their teachers) seeking help for their courses in political or social subjects. All day long there is an enormous mail to read and to answer; there are threats (by mail and by phone) which are always anonymous. There are people to see, all over the city, in all sorts of weather; and there are always meetings, meetings, meetings, because the right of free assembly in America is one which works both for right and for wrong in civic affairs.

Gus Gazulis couldn't stand the pace, but he kept at it: teaching, always teaching, as he worked. A brilliant young student of political science got a "cum laude" for his thesis written from the Frances Sweeney Committee's files for his Harvard degree. And, under Gus' direction, he went, as many of us did, to meet and talk in person with individuals who hate everything the Frances Sweeney Committee stands for, because as one of "the friends of democracy" it is their sworn enemy. A youth headed straight for juvenile delinquency as a young racketeer came under Gus' knowing eye. In the office he read and worked and asked questions; within a year Gus had him aglow with the hitherto impossible prospect of going to college and "making something of himself." He's done it; he's a fine young man, launched on a career of constructive citizenship.

Some 200 such youngsters have passed through Constantine Gazulis' orbit of influence: some merely for a bit of momentary help with material for their studies; others to have the entire course of their lives directed toward citizens' action for a peaceful society, regardless of how they earn their living. They are the volunteer workers who distribute the Frances Sweeney Committee's literature when it is in handbill form.

Such a distribution took place at the

polling places on city election day in 1945. Eleven candidates for public office had made public statements against minority groups in their districts. The statements were hauled out of the Frances Sweeney Committee's files and quoted on handbills without comment other than the time and place where the statements had been made. Students passed out these interesting quotations in front of the polling places. All those 11 candidates for public office, who hoped to serve some of the people by belittling others, were defeated in that election.

Two summers ago Gerald Winrod was scheduled to hold a week's revival meeting in a little fundamentalist church in Salem. Gus filled a portfolio with Gerald Winrod's own writings and sermons and, accompanied by several other representatives of organizations to fight prejudice, took a trip to Salem. There he handed the portfolio to a group of churchmen, explaining that they might like to see for themselves what manner of revival was about to come to Salem. He also remarked that no civil rights would be infringed upon if Gerald Winrod were not allowed to come there. Salem Community Church is not an auditorium for hire; it is a House of God. Its pastor read Gerald Winrod's literature for the first time in his life and made his own decision, planning it as a stinging rebuke. He did not notify Winrod of any change in plan and left the posters announcing the revival up around the town. At the hour when the week's revival was to open, only eight persons (including a member of the Frances Sweeney Committee) were outside the church. They saw Winrod arrive, stare incredulously at the locked door, read the notice tacked to it announcing that all services were suspended and the church closed for one week, then stomp angrily away. Later, the Frances Sweeney Committee clipped and filed Winrod's



printed diatribe about the "Communists against God" "inspired by the Jews" who "martyred" him in Salem.

At least one Boston columnist, unfriendly to FEPC, credited an issue of the Frances Sweeney Committee's Boston City Reporter with having swung the legislative vote in favor of FEPC when it was about to be defeated for the second time. That particular issue of the Boston City Reporter quoted the openly expressed anti-Semitism, anti-Negroism, and anti-Catholicism of legislators debating in opposition to FEPC the previous year, when it had been defeated. Since the law in Massachusetts does not require an exact record of legislative sessions, a member of the Frances Sweeney Committee covers such hearings as are of first importance to its work, and takes verbatim notes of the debate for future reference. Thus it had the record of these legislators. Gus Gazulis, the strategist, saw to it that every legislator got a copy of that issue of the Boston City Reporter, and that each legislator knew it had gone to the constituency of the men whom it quoted three days before the bill went to the floor for vote. FEPC in Massachusetts this time won out.

It was the coming of Gerald L. K. Smith to Boston for the first time that caused Constantine Gazulis' precarious health to break. That was a year ago in May. The Frances Sweeney Committee's file on Smith decided all Boston editors to ignore the gentleman's presence in town. Only 48 persons (including a member of the Frances Sweeney Committee) attended his first Boston meeting. Gus stood in the rain outside the hall, checking to make certain that all 48 persons were die-hard remnants of the "Christian" Front and not new recruits to fascism. He caught a cold which became pneumonia; he emerged from pneumonia with more heart damage.

But, when he recovered, he refused to take the summer off to rest up. "There's too much work to be done," he fretted. Two more attacks of grave illness followed within a year. Early in April—at exactly the same time of year that Frances Sweeney had been stricken four years before—Gus succumbed to heart failure, and died on May 22. Like Frances, he died at the age of 36 from the same combination of physical circumstances which had cut short her life. Just before he died, Gus protested: "I want to live; there's so much work to do."

Constantine Gazulis is living, in the legacy of creative citizenship which he built as a living monument to Frances Sweeney. Young people of his own training are carrying on the work. A part of their effort is to help in the establishment of similar committees in other communities and other states. Members of the Frances Sweeney Committee have been summoned from Boston to as far away as St. Paul to tell about the committee's work and how it can be accomplished.

"Aw, I'm just an average guy," Gus used to say, when some writer would ask if he could pay tribute to him in an article or a book which he had helped to formulate. "Throw the bouquets at the people who count. There's only one thing I'd like to hear said about me sometime. When I was a kid, guys I'd meet at school would say: 'Gazulis is a Greek, but he's a nice fellow.' I'd like this country to be so healthy that people would say: 'Gazulis is an American, and he's never tried to hurt or injure anybody.'"

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## NOTHING OVERWHELMS GIUSEPPE

EDNA BLUE

GIUSEPPE was one of ten children born to a family in Cassino. One night, shortly before the German retreat, Nazi soldiers marched into the house and ordered Giuseppe's father to follow them outside. They made him dig his grave and shot him into it. They did this to all able-bodied men they thought might later help the Allies.

Giuseppe was only nine, but he ran into the house and came out with some hidden hand grenades which he threw at the Germans. He says he killed two, but he doesn't remember very well, because the Germans machine-gunned him and left him for dead. Later a truck ran over his leg, and it had to be amputated.

When the heavy bombings came, his family had nothing but a rudimentary shelter to go to. It was hit, and everyone but Giuseppe, who was outside at the time, perished. Hopping on one leg, he found his way to the nearby town of Roccasecca, where a poor peasant took him in for the night—and kept him two years. At the end of that time, he told Giuseppe he could not go on keeping him as there was nothing to eat. He took him to the nearest railroad station and smuggled him onto the couplings between railroad cars on a train going to Rome.

In Rome, Giuseppe slept in railroad stations, doorways, and parks, and lived on handouts from American G.I.s. It was an existence such as has been dramatized in *Shoe Shine*, the Italian movie. Finally, some monks told Giuseppe about the San Michele Institute for war-maimed chil-

dren, and in the summer of 1947 he was formally admitted to it.

I first met Giuseppe in August 1947, in Rome. He was one of eighty war-maimed boys who lived in an orphanage. I had gone there to arrange "adoption" for as many of them as possible through the Foster Parents' Plan for War Children. The first sight of them was a nightmare to me—waving arm stumps, missing eyes, faces blackened by gun-powder scars. I wanted to make friends with each of the boys, but I felt clumsy, heartsick.

Suddenly Giuseppe stepped up to me. He came as close as he could and leveled his eyes to mine. He stared hard, made a little circle with his thumb and index finger, with the other three fingers extended straight out. He shook his hand in my face and spoke.

I couldn't understand all he said in his broken English, he was so intense. He was on crutches then, not even a peg leg. I noticed that his remaining foot was larger than a man's. He had hopped around so long on one foot it had become overdeveloped.

He was trying to tell me he had friends or relatives in America with whom his dead parents corresponded, and he wanted me to find them for him. I promised to help, and had photos of Giuseppe taken to aid the search. When it was all over, I wasn't quite sure, but I thought I heard him make a queer sound with his lips, which in his vernacular expressed great doubt.

## NOTHING OVERWHELMS GIUSEPPE

After my return home, I found it would be possible to bring five of our foster children on a visit to America as part of a campaign to make the public realize the great need for help. Immediately I thought of Giuseppe. Here would be a chance also to facilitate the search for his friends, which so far had proved fruitless.

Giuseppe arrived in New York, December 9, 1947. He wore a cut-down GI suit. His only possessions were a bar of soap and a sponge. His hair was clipped short, according to the custom in European orphanages, and it seemed very coarse and black. It never occurred to me that he was a good-looking child, except for his sparkling brown eyes. When I looked closely, scars outlining his right eye and both sides of his forehead became visible. The dimple in his right cheek, which appeared when he smiled or scowled, wasn't a dimple at all but a scar.

The reason Giuseppe seemed so small for a twelve-year-old was that his peg leg was strapped to his shoulder as well as to his waist. Also the leg was too short, and he had to stoop to make it reach the ground. Soon after he arrived, he was promised an artificial leg with a knee that could bend, and a foot that could wear socks and a shoe.

This Giuseppe could not at first believe.

"Not possible!" he exclaimed. But later, when he saw several ex-servicemen who were wearing artificial limbs, he took a good look, and his face lit up.

"Possible!" he cried.

One of the first things we did was arrange for the artificial leg. Minerva Pious, radio actress, who was paying for Giuseppe's care under the Foster Parents' Plan for War Children, offered to buy it. The night he first had it, before he went to bed, he suddenly became very thoughtful. He went through his suitcase and took out the four or five single socks. He looked straight at me to make sure it was all

right. Then he rolled up each sock into a little ball, and, wham! threw each one into the trash basket. Then came the one big ugly pointed black shoe—that got an extra kick before it was sent flying into



GIUSEPPE WHEN HE FIRST ARRIVED IN  
NEW YORK IN DECEMBER 1947

the basket. I did not laugh—Giuseppe was in grim earnest.

Then he lifted one of his new shoes, placed a hand on it, open at an angle, and shook it back and forth a little.

"Possible give a good kick in the — now."

This was one of his favorite expressions, picked up from the *cr's* in Italy. I knew I should scold him for it, but I hadn't the heart, certainly not on such an occasion as this. Then he dropped suddenly to the floor on his knees and burst into eloquent prayer. "With wooden gam (leg) me no could kneel."

There emerged a truly new Giuseppe. Besides having a foot and a knee joint, the leg was the right length, and strapped only around the waist. This permitted the boy to stand straight, and for the first time we realized what a fully grown, beautifully developed child he was. Walking was a little difficult at first, but he kept at it. Several times he took some nasty falls, but he would get up again, remaining on the pavement just long enough to swear copiously in both English and Italian.

Giuseppe had now been in America for a few weeks and was becoming acclimated. He even called me "Mom" as my own children do. Soon he was singing and playing his harmonica all over the house.

The hardest thing to cope with was his distrust of everyone, and his little plots and schemes. Yet I realized that if he had not resorted to such things he might not be alive today. As far as I know, Giuseppe never told a lie, but he never believed anything anyone else said. He would insist upon your swearing to the truth by crossing yourself, spitting, and making crooked fingers and joining them. Then he would squint his eyes and say: "If you speaka no good, we finish and possible—" and he would make a noise with his mouth and draw his fingers across his neck, looking every bit as dangerous as his gesture indicated.

At first he would never take off his cap, because of his shaven head. As his hair began to grow, he would stare at himself in the mirror and anxiously try to get a

part in it. When it got long enough, we took him to a swank barber-shop.

Danton, the Italian owner, waited on Giuseppe himself. The boy seated himself in the chair, leaned back, folded his arms, and announced, "Me King. Come now, you work."

Danton took the cue, and motioned for the manicurist and shoe-shine boy, but nothing ever overwhelmed Giuseppe. He grinned broadly.

"Similar chinema (cinema)," he said, with joy.

Danton cleared the neckline. Then he began with the front hair and sideburns. Slowly what had looked like a black porcupine began to turn into a little boy's head. And then came the part. Giuseppe smiled, bowed his head.

"Beautiful, eh?" he queried. The occupants of the 14 other chairs agreed unanimously.

That night before he went to sleep, Giuseppe told me his happiness was now complete—two feet with shoes, and a hair part.

"Everything. Everything," he kept repeating.

I tried to keep a diary during Giuseppe's sixty days with us. Looking through it I find this:

A walk with Giuseppe on 42nd Street is exactly like walking on Main Street in any small town. The traffic cop waits for Giuseppe to whistle, as only Giuseppe can, and signal the traffic. And he always has his little joke.

"Presta, presta. No stoppa traffic. Possible woman in car must go (cabinet)!"

He always opens the Shanty Restaurant door as he goes by and calls out to the short-order cook, "Hello, Polack!" The hand with the big knife waves back in greeting.

"No good Polack!" Giuseppe shouts. They are great friends.

## NOTHING OVERWHELMS GIUSEPPE

We spent the day in the park. Giuseppe had some peanuts to feed the pigeons. He held his hand out with a few peanuts on it and called "Come on pigeon, eat." In one second a large pigeon lit on his hand. Giuseppe gripped the two little feet and with a truly wild gleam in his eye said—"Now me eat pigeon."

I understand they ate them all in Italy during the war.

At our apartment, he plays a game with fingers with the elevator boys to see which of the two cars he will take, and unless he is allowed to run the car, he swears loudly until we reach our floor. Then, as he gets off, he turns around and calls to the other passengers: "Watcha your stop!"

You never can tell when Giuseppe will go right up to someone in the street and challenge him about almost anything. The strange thing is that not one person ever appears annoyed. Many times he comes back with a dollar bill.

At odd intervals, Giuseppe thinks about his return to Italy. He seems to feel that we are only talking when we say we will write to him, that we will not forget him.

We ask if we have ever told him a lie, and he has to admit we haven't. Then he becomes very serious and tells of further fears. "Me come back to America, and you all dead. Not possible me look cemetery."

My husband, who does not like to be tossed off in this way, talks back.

"Not me. I'm going to be here when you come back."

"Possible you dead tomorrow," is Giuseppe's answer. The subject of death is one of his favorites.

"You die, malady, similar this," he says, rolling his eyes. "You die from boom-boom-boom—thisa way," and he opens his eyes wide in a glassy stare.

Everybody wants to please Giuseppe, and he is invited to many dinners. He always earns his dinner by singing, play-

ing the harmonica, or giving imitations of those present. He is a real personality, makes a wonderful guest of honor.

People prepare or order what they think Giuseppe will like—especially spaghetti with meat sauce. Giuseppe only likes spaghetti with perfectly plain olive oil and garlic. Consequently no matter where he is, he looks at the burdened spaghetti and says, "*Madonna mia!* No good—too much stuff!"

He may seem a little ungrateful, but it is just his candor, and his dislike of seeing food spoiled. He says about butter: "No good—olio good."

After a big dinner he often comes home, gets a big knife and a green pepper or cucumber, and just sits around eating it. It is quite charming to watch him wave the knife as he speaks and decry the American method of spoiling good food.

When he likes anything, Giuseppe pushes his index finger into his cheek, clicks his tongue, and winks his eye—no words are needed. This applies to a good dish of garlic spaghetti as well as to a pretty girl.

Giuseppe was on the radio several times in behalf of the Italian children. He played the harmonica, too, and was on Juvenile Jury once with Robin Morgan. On wov, an Italian-language broadcasting station, he couldn't believe his audience contained more people of Italian descent than there were in Rome!

After this broadcast he received hundreds and hundreds of letters. Many contained money that was just for Giuseppe, not the general fund. He built a bank account of \$400.

Always he insisted on opening his own mail. When a ten-dollar bill came out, he would puff himself up. "Good, good." When a one-dollar bill appeared, he would swear under his breath, frown, but end by shrugging, "O.K. I'll take it."



There were hundreds of boxes of candy and chocolate bars. Giuseppe guarded each one. "I'll take them to San Michele to the bambini." And he did, along with dozens of sweaters, suits, and shoes.

After the broadcast, streams of little Italian women came into our office all day long. Each one felt that she alone had something special to tell Giuseppe. Each patted his head and squeezed his cheeks. He didn't like it one bit. But when money or a candy bar appeared, he would gladly sing a song or play a tune on his harmonica. Many of the women wanted to take him home for keeps. Each one blessed him and cried over him a little. It all added to his wonderful ego.

The man at the artificial limb place had explained to Giuseppe very carefully that he would need to oil his leg only once every six months, unless it began to creak, and he showed him just where the oil was to go.

Shortly after Giuseppe had got his leg and while he was still getting accustomed to it, I heard a peculiar squeak and asked Giuseppe to walk up and down the room for me. Sure enough, it was his knee.

"Get me the oilcan, Pinocchio!" I said.

Giuseppe was quick to recognize the situation. He went out of the room and returned with the can. I sat down on the floor and oiled the joint. My Pinocchio walked up and down to try the leg, but the squeak would not go away. Giuseppe seemed to be enjoying the whole thing; I was worried.

At last I said, "Let's forget about it. I'll take you back to the leg man tomorrow."

I went into the next room for a moment. Then I heard Giuseppe calling from the living room, "Mom! Mom!"

There sat Giuseppe with his leg taken apart. He beamed as he showed me a bobby pin. That's what had caused all the trouble!

I wasn't ready to rejoice, however, as I looked at the steel rings and strangely shaped screws. As usual, Giuseppe was undismayed.

"Me fix O.K.," he remarked confidently, setting himself to the job.

He was as good as his word, and soon there stood the leg as good as new. Then I spied a steel ring on the floor! When I pointed to it, Giuseppe's face clouded. But in a short time he had found the place for the ring. He was right; the squeak was gone.

The following day I called the leg man, and he told me to bring Giuseppe down so he could see if the leg was really all right; otherwise it might be very dangerous to walk on.

He pronounced the job perfect, but counselled Giuseppe not to take the leg apart again unless he had to. Then he added, "In a way I am glad he did it, because now we can be sure that if he ever has to replace some of the parts with the extra ones I gave him, he will know how to do it correctly."

After we had got out of the elevator and into the street, Giuseppe suddenly produced from his pocket a large, black, coil spring.

"Tonight," he remarked, "me fix again."

I was terrified. I tried to get him back into the building and the leg man's office, but just as suddenly he burst out laughing. With an expressive gesture he made me understand he had "pinched" the extra spring.

"Joke!" he said.

But the big black spring didn't look very funny to me.

It was always a relief to Giuseppe to take his leg off at night. It must have felt very heavy. As soon as it was off, he would start turning somersaults all over the house, so quickly it was hard to believe



## NOTHING OVERWHELMS GIUSEPPE

the moving wheel was really a little boy. Then he would switch on the radio and dance on his one foot. I always wanted to be sad then, but the child was so joyous and free I could not be. He would hop around and kiss us good night, and then motion for me to go and tuck him into



GIUSEPPE PACKED FOR HIS RETURN TO ITALY, LOADED WITH AMERICAN GIFTS

bed. It was a time of day he enjoyed as much as I did, and it was a moment very dear to me.

This was the Giuseppe that no one knew. This was the little boy who didn't need to swear and be tough. He was in a nice clean bed with a Mama to tuck him in—something he had not had for years.

There was no tossing around for

Giuseppe. He fell asleep very quickly. Each night when I came in to take a last look at him, I was always surprised to see how he slept, with joined hands beneath his cheek, like a healthy little angel, this street urchin who had hopped around on one leg for so long, slept in parks and freight trains, and killed two men. I thought of the hundreds of thousands of war orphans, sleeping in crude beds with no one to tuck them in, and wished that all mankind could share my sixty days of Giuseppe. Here was the great reason to end wars forever.

When the sixty days were over and his relatives had not been found, Giuseppe knew he must go back to Italy. He said to us, "I am going to keep on singing so I won't think."

Just before bedtime, he went around saying good-bye to everything in the house.

"Good-bye walls. Good-bye books. Good-bye bed."

He even went into the bathroom, and patted the toilet seat. "Good-bye cabinet!" (He had always been lost in admiration of American plumbing! Sometimes he would spend an hour in the shower—on one leg—enjoying the water and the soap.)

As I was tucking him into bed, I began to cry.

He put his arms around me and I could feel his warm tears on my neck. I wondered if I was doing wrong. Then I thought that if one of my own children were going away, I would probably feel just this way and would not try to hide my tears.

So I said to Giuseppe, "We are going to miss you very much. Now we mustn't cry any more. I know you know just how we feel about you—and it's important that you know it."

At the airport, Giuseppe did not come

## COMMON GROUND

near me at all. He sang, just as he had said he would, and during the hour's wait for the plane he was surrounded by people laughing at his antics. Now and then I would hear the men roar, and I knew Giuseppe was saying some of his bad words. His excess baggage—gifts for his friends—amounted to \$252. "More overweight than the Shah of Persia," the man at the airport told me. A far cry from the little boy who had arrived there two months before with an old sponge and a bar of yellow soap.

Then the announcement came over the loud speaker: "Flight to London now leaving. . . ."

I kissed Giuseppe quickly and he kissed me.

"Be good," I said. "We love you."

He was gone through the door. My young daughter followed him to the field. When she returned, I asked if he was all right. He had wanted to know if Mom had cried.

A few days later, we received an airmail letter from our representative in Italy, telling us of Giuseppe's homecoming. A whole caravan of cars moved out from Rome to meet him at the airport. There was an official from the Ministry of the Interior, several newsmen and photographers, some Red Cross Sisters—and seven mutilated children from the orphanage.

"Giuseppe handed out gifts to everyone. Then he started demonstrating the

boxing matches he had seen, and baseball. He would teach everyone at San Michele how to play. He showed his gold ring, his watch chain. And his keys, oh, how proud he was of his keys!

"He loves America. He adores it. He worships it. He could not stop talking. The radio. So much food. The people. . . . 'Once,' he said, 'I lost my wallet on the street and the person who found it returned it!'"

"At five we had him safely delivered at the orphanage. It was then that I saw Giuseppe lose all his braggadocio. My presence, I think was his last link with his wonderful dream."

Now has come my first letter from Giuseppe:

"I am glad to hear that my money is still in the bank. I believe it is possible it will be safe until I am old enough to come to America. If anybody tries to get it, please put them in the calaboose.

"I still remember all the songs I used to sing to you and I'll sing them again when I come back.

"Lots of love and lots of kisses,  
"Giuseppe."

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Mrs. Edna Blue is the international chairman of the Foster Parents' Plan for War Children, Inc., one of the largest child-welfare organizations in the world. She has been associated with the Foster Parents' Plan since its inception eleven years ago.

## PASSPORT TO YOUTH

ELIZABETH McFADDEN

SHOLEM ARONSON stood leaning against the Third Avenue L, the train's roar shaking him as it passed. It seemed as though the tumult of noise and force was loosening his heart from the cold and despair of concentration-camp life, and with a pang of wonder he realized that he wanted to talk to someone, he who in the last seven years had longed almost unceasingly for the chance to be away from the group of prisoners, then of DP's, then of the other orphans coming to America. He, who had been so cocky and assured, longed that strangers, shopping, would notice him.

He looked across the sidewalk at the fruit stand and it became very important that he should know what the fruits were, their taste, their feel, their names. Pointing, he called to a young man sweeping a corridor between the stands of fruit, "What are they, mister?" He was surprised that his voice had its usual, hard ring.

The sweeper turned his head with a short, coughing laugh as though such a question could only raise disgust. He shouted back in a bored monotone, "They're bananas, son, and they're five cents apiece."

Sholem touched the change in his pocket. He had walked across Germany on less, and he wasn't going to part with his money so easily. He would "requisition" the fruit. He half smiled to himself. It was so easy, he thought, as his mood swept back to the days of lone independence. He thought again as he had many times in the last years that

if you just take care of yourself, quickly and all along, you come out on top. He felt comfortable in this accustomed attitude, and when the young man's back was turned, he tried to steal a banana from the heavy bunch hung in front of the store. He got the fruit off deftly, but, as he turned to move away, the young man who had been sweeping turned abruptly, grabbed at his coat with one hand, and snatched away the banana with the other.

"Now, get!" he shouted, and Sholem sucked in his breath in the face of the man's fierceness.

"Get going, and don't let me catch you around here again!" the young man snapped and swatted the air after Sholem with his arm.

The boy looked at him apparently unmoved, a mask of unconcern over his face. He walked away slowly, his underlip thrust out slightly. If he was hurt he did not show it.

As he strolled off, some boys his own age came running down the street, yelping after a dirty brown and white dog who had carried off their ball. Sholem eagerly joined in the race, his heart lightening and his quick pace putting him ahead of the others.

"That kid can run!" the groceryman said to the sweeper. In the older man's voice was a tone of surprise, even a touch of approval at the lad's fast disappearance, skinny legs showing through thin pants as he ran and dark curls bouncing on his forehead.

A block away, the boy turned and

awaited the other youths, half smiling as they came up to him. But their leader only rasped, "If you're such a Gil Dodds, why didn't you get our ball?" and the group turned away.

Sholem wondered who Dodds was. He felt foolish that he hadn't got the ball for the boys. He had lost himself in the swift joy of being one of them even briefly. He opened his mouth to call after them but they had run ahead fast and the only sound he made was like the last echo of an anguished cry. He kicked gently at a brownstone stoop with his worn shoes, and the aching loneliness filled him again. He sat on the stoop watching people pass, longing for a part in their occasional friendly greetings.

Of all the sights on the glutted street, the boy particularly noticed friendliness, as if trying to understand something just beyond his reach. He sighed as though the task were too great, then turned his mind inward and felt satisfaction. His brown eyes softened as he realized, "I'm in America." For the last three days, since his arrival in New York with other refugee children brought over by the Committee for the Care of European Children, Sholem had thought over and over again, "I'm in America. I'm in America," and the idea, at first painful because he was so far from his native Germany, became more and more joyful. Gradually he understood what it meant to him that the Committee had chosen him to come because his cousin had emigrated to America in 1939.

He was gladdened at the thought of making his home in America, and he tilted his face in full enjoyment to the May sun. He had been proud of getting passage. "I made it," he said aloud as though he were talking to someone. He wanted to talk to someone, to stop some of the strollers and tell them the oddly painful miracle of being in America.

"But they'd laugh or they'd get bossy and send me back to the shelter," he thought.

He wondered about the shelter and hoped they would not think him ungrateful because he had run away. He couldn't do anything else. At 16 he hadn't felt like a child in years and the grownups' concern at the shelter had made him uneasy. He had had to run away and seek his own life and his own friends.

Now, warmed by the noonday sun, he relaxed and felt in his heart a nameless ache that somehow reminded him of the bawling of the ship's foghorn at night. For the first time in seven years he let his thoughts linger on his grandmother.

He remembered how, when he sat on her lap, she enveloped him with her arms. He remembered how she looked at him quietly, resolutely, when they came to take him to the camp when he was 9. He remembered her soft, slurring voice as she told him, "Sholem, always be good. Be worthy of your father," how she kissed him behind his ear—where now one of his scars was fading—as the Nazi guard took him.

"What would she think now?" he wondered. He was no longer her Sholem. He was Sam, so christened by Americans, only European survivor of a family of 10, a self-reliant ex-prisoner who had saved himself by his unemotion, clear thinking and fast legs, who was pointed out as one of those who had cheated death by jumping and running from a crematorium-bound truck.

For the first time since he had been taken from his home, he truly and fully missed his grandmother. In the camp he had followed the advice of one sinewy man who had told him, "You must think only of this minute. Then you will be all right." After that, he had thought only of the minute at hand, of the next

five, and only once in a great while of his life after his imprisonment. He had pushed away, almost instinctively, the warm blur of feeling that welled up when the idea of his grandmother came to him.

Now he let his mind luxuriate in remembering her, let his long-choked love flow around his recollections like a swollen spring stream around boulders. He tried to recall exactly how she looked, how she talked, in a low voice which always stirred his heart with gladness, how her clothes, when he hugged her leg and pressed his face into them as a child, held the sweet smell of her cooking.

The thought made him realize how hungry he was. "Better eat," he thought quickly, and the sight of the rich bunch of bananas sprang into his mind.

He stretched in the deep-warming sun and took off his jacket, rolling up his shirt sleeves to the heat. Pulling his money out of his pocket, he counted again, with the slowness of a newcomer and the care of one unused to earning. He had \$1.50. I'll make out, he thought and remembered with encouragement the DP camp director's praise over his learning English from American workers.

He wondered casually just how good his English was and hoped his firm tone would hide his doubts. Throwing his coat over his arm, he walked back toward the grocery store determined to buy and taste bananas.

The grocer was standing in the doorway as Sholem approached the store. He was a strange, fat figure of a man—strange because Sholem could not remember ever seeing a fat man before—and he was surrounded by a huge white apron. Was he friendly, Sholem wondered, or was that smile hiding harshness that would lead to a blow?

Sholem's step broke in momentary fear. He would make believe he was just passing by.

"Well!" called the grocer loudly. "So it's you, my fast-running friend, my banana-stealing friend! You come to steal more bananas, hah?"

Sholem almost whimpered but stubbornly stifled his desire to run.

"No, mister, please! I buy!" His voice cracked with eagerness as he thrust out his skinny hand with some coins.

The man stood like marble for a moment, his mouth open. Sholem saw the blood recede from his fat face and the soft lips tremble.

He is angry, thought Sholem frantically. He will beat me!

"Mister, please, I want to buy," he repeated cajolingly.

Suddenly the man unbent. He grasped Sholem's outstretched arm as the boy struggled to release himself. But he could not escape, for the fat man held on, his eyes staring fixedly and burning on the boy's skinny arm.

"My boy! My boy!" said the grocer with a soft moaning sound. "Ach! Ach! You, too! What have they done taking their hate out on you. Those numbers, those horrible numbers—on your poor arm."

Sholem ceased his struggles. The fat man was not clutching his arm in anger. No! He was holding it gently, tenderly. His voice was warm and deep and thick with feeling and it flooded into Sholem's ears with a pounding sweetness that made him almost dizzy. The fat arms were soft and comforting, and the deep rumble of the man's voice awakened long hidden memories of affection and personal love that sent a shock of joy sweeping through his body. He stood quite still as the grocer rubbed his shoulder with a firm, hearty motion, grunting and murmuring, "There . . . there . . . soon you'll forget all that. Soon you'll be just a kid again and you'll fill out to size. Hah! What's this now?" He recoiled as his hand

touched a scar indentation on the lad's head.

Sholem's hand reached up and rested on the plump fingers, pressing them into the scar as if to change it by this kindness.

"They hit me there," Sholem said and there was a tingling catch in his voice.

He paused and he looked up at the compassion in the grocer's eyes, and he knew he had to go on and tell this man what he had never told anyone before, how he had felt when a Nazi guard had hit him with the butt of a revolver, how he had struggled not to lose consciousness for fear of dying, how he had passed out and gradually come to under the care of fellow prisoners.

The man stood shaking his head, muttering small, full words of anguish as Sholem spoke. At the end he put his hand to the boy's cheek in a clumsy gesture of sympathy.

His voice was deeper than before and had a tone of finality about it. "We won't think any more of that," he said. "We'll start things new here. You stay and you can work at little jobs. You can play. You can get on my kid's baseball team"—he lifted the boy's chin and

smiled—"or you go in for running, eh?"

Sholem's body felt limp with acceptance of this kindness. He tried to smile. He wanted desperately to show the fat man he felt at home at last. The man's warm expression showed him that he understood. "Maybe you can go to night school and learn those things and be better than a grocer," the man suggested, and as he saw Sholem's eyes filling he stopped. Walking over to a bunch of bananas, he picked off four.

"Here, son," he said as he turned, and Sholem saw his hands turn slightly outward at his side, open with the gifts. With a sharp intake of breath the youth flung himself forward. He turned his face and sank his cheek on the slope of the man's chest, and as the grocer's arms encircled his shoulders and head the boy felt fall from his eyes the scalding tears of youth.

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Elizabeth McFadden is a city staff reporter on the Newark Evening News. Earlier she handled publicity for the Federal Housing Administration in New Jersey.

## THE MEN WHO LOAD THE SHIPS

Typical of the One World in which we live are the stevedores at American ports. Of all races and national backgrounds, they work together to speed the interchange of the world's goods.



## PUERTO RICAN STRENGTH

J. MAYONE STYCOS

THE ISLAND was suddenly there. From the air it looked first like a huge caricature of a placid water lily, but as the plane glided closer details began forming suddenly. The long flat coastal plain of sugar that surrounds the island looked like a vast green pastel slashed geometrically by the even rows of irrigation ditches; the irregular lines of hills dotted with coffee trees were crouching, furry little animals that crowded together around the sugar belt; and finally there was the bulk of the island, the stark, volcanic rock that jutted from the center of the panorama, those tortuous eroded mountains which are the joy of the airborne tourist but which make two-thirds of the land of Puerto Rico virtually useless.

Before we landed I felt carefully of the small dagger tucked in my belt. Hearsay and yarns of the Navy had convinced me that no "Americano" should walk a Borinquen street unarmed; but even after my first half hour in San Juan the shining defender of Americanism was sheepishly tucked into a suitcase, material evidence of the first (and far from the last) stereotyped illusion of Puerto Rico to be discarded. I had breakfast on a hotel roof overlooking the city, and I wondered where were the poverty, filth, and ugliness that presumably characterized Puerto Rican cities. I could see the century-browned Morro fortifications cutting the bright green sea like the long prow of a gigantic boat, patches of lackadaisical palm along sun-blached sand, and tops

of cool white buildings—all highly infused and intensified by the brilliant light of a 10 o'clock Caribbean sun.

I proceeded directly to the University where I was to work with the Princeton Population Research group. I found a spacious, palm-populated campus, the buildings a fabulous kind of Spanish rococo, the stucco walls gaily decorated with warm-colored moldings. Upon arriving at the Social Science Research Center my duties were more clearly defined: I was to keep close check on the interviewers engaged in an insular-wide study concerning the whys and hows of human fertility in Puerto Rico. We began poring over the long lists of households to be interviewed, and I soon began to catch the rhythm of the unusual names and addresses: "Pedro Rodriguez, 24 Tierra Street, Rio Piedras; Juan Dias, near the military highway across a small field of plantains, left of the stream in Barrio Campo, Guaynabo," etc.

The opportunity soon arrived when I could see the personalities behind these names. Choosing one of the more difficult urban areas I accompanied an interviewer into a section of San Juan which the tongue-in-cheek humor of some unknown Borinquen sage had dubbed "La Perla," one of the slums of Puerto Rico which the New York journalists have amply described. I had fully expected the garbage-littered back yards, the matchbox shacks leaning heavily on toothpick supports, the litter-strewn tides sloshing around and under the packing-board

floors, the sun-and-dirt-browed children running naked on skinny legs—all this I had been prepared for. What I had not anticipated was the smart styled, opulent, California-like architecture that loomed in the background of La Perla's filth. These society-set apartments were my first discovery of the many "black and white" dichotomies which seem to characterize the island, and threw into relief the statistics I later learned concerning the uneven distribution of wealth—figures which revealed that whereas the average annual income of the lower-class families is somewhere around \$300, if the total wealth of the island's 350,000 families were distributed equally the average family income would be \$1,000. It is estimated that where 80 per cent of the families in the United States receive one half the national income, 80 per cent of the families of Puerto Rico receive one quarter.

With this lopsided distribution proportion, it is unfortunate that Puerto Rico does not at least have a tradition of philanthropy, which, piecemeal and inadequate as it has been, has provided some ballast to the faultily weighted wealth distribution in the United States. One is, in fact, impressed by the obliviousness with which the upper-class Borinquen regards his less fortunate neighbor. While he would do anything for a member of his own class, financial aid to the lower class as a class (for assistance to lower-class individuals is expected of the benevolent patron) appears inconceivable. The poor deserve to be poor; it is the unfortunate result of their inferior stock, and I have been told by civic leaders that it is virtually impossible to extract contributions for charitable purposes from the rich of the island. I was continually amazed by the way the impeccably palm-beached, panama-hatted aristocracy could walk through the garbage rubble of dusty

streets with the total disregard of the lord of the manor whose civic pride begins and ends with his particular sugar plantation. When the sugar princes leave their Hollywood homes and deign to pass through the town of their workers, it is perhaps their badge of aristocracy that they do not see. Indifference to all things inferior is perhaps the mental mark of distinction of the upper class, or again it may be that surfeited bodies and cloyed senses are not able to perceive the smell of offal.

It was not until I visited the rural sections of the island, however, that I witnessed both the real poverty and the real strength of Puerto Rico. I was first impressed with the striking incongruity between nature and man. The land, sea, and sky of the rural sections are blended into an incredible combination of color contours: sun-scorched clouds, masses of the great tranquil green of the sea, and the patchwork pastels that dapple the stout hills evoke an unforgettable aesthetic experience. But the man-made counterparts of this bucolic scene induce another kind of aesthetic experience. Pigs and chickens can be seen amiably leaving the front door of the carelessly timbered shanties which house a large proportion of the insular inhabitants; stream laundry (the clothes are placed on a rock in a stream and arduously pounded until clean), the public pump, and the backyard outhouse are as far as plumbing has reached the rural areas. I recall sitting on the floor of a native *bohío* (thatched hut) overlooking the Lucillo beach and mountain and thinking that this wretched home without tables, chairs, or any degree of conveniences had probably the most beautiful back yard in the world. I thought a lot about Frank L. Wright's functional architecture where housing is adapted to the needs of the

inhabitant and must blend into the natural environment. In this land where the landscape seemed begging for homes beautiful enough to blend and complement it, the works of man seemed shoddy and disgraceful.

Motoring through the island is the easiest way concretely to realize some of the insular problems, and as we sped around the precipitous curves that wind through the center of Puerto Rico, I saw some of the things that create the widespread poverty. I saw straw-hatted *jíbaros* working the soil on slopes as steep as 60 degrees, slopes so steep that the grazing steers had worn concentric patterns of ruts into the soil—this soil soon to be caught by the rain water running down the hills and washed into the stream. In this manner much of the productive land has washed away over the centuries, and at present only a quarter of the land can be considered better than fair. The rich coastal plain, which extends only about a mile inward and surrounds the island, is principally packed with sugar cane, but much of it is wasted as unorganized pasture space. The rest of the island is hill country where the dying industries of coffee and tobacco are still painfully followed, and where the *jíbaro* farms his small patch of plantains. In passing these almost inaccessible farms I suddenly realized that these were the people whose names and addresses appeared so neatly on our lists. It was almost inconceivable that these people had names and addresses; they seemed to be living so apart from the kind of life and civilization we have come to associate with the human being. After I had visited a few of their shanties, however, I began to understand how really human these people are, how they possess a courage and kindheartedness often lacking in the more urban members of the human race.

One of the first of these homes I visited, that of Juan Dias, required two hours of traveling, despite the fact that the island is only 35 miles wide and that we traveled only about 15 miles as the crow flies. We proceeded as far as possible by the usual mode of insular locomotion, the *público* (ordinarily a Ford station wagon that carries as many passengers as possible, plus one, to all points on the island). The driver had stopped many times to ask workers along the road if they knew where Juan Dias lived. The other passengers in the *público*, rather than becoming irritated at such repeated delays, joined in the spirit of the quest, volunteering opinions, eagerly asking questions of anyone along the road who might be able to give information. This leisurely and helpful spirit is of course characteristic of the inhabitants, and I was thankful that I was not riding with a taxi full of New Yorkers! We finally determined the approximate position and proceeded the remainder of the distance by foot. At the first place where we asked directions, a small boy was dispatched to guide us. This happened frequently and never ceased to be a pleasant sort of surprise. Each time the boy would follow wordlessly behind us, speaking only if we walked in the wrong direction, and dropping away when the sought location came into view. After walking through the gently weaving fields of *guajana* (the beautiful purplish flower of the sugar cane), fording a stream, and climbing muddy hills, we reached the small *finca* and home of Juan Dias.

A smiling woman was in the doorway, and she beckoned us to enter. There were three small rooms in the shack, and the main room had several handmade chairs and a crude table. There were many pictures on the wall, most of them from the colored section of the Sunday newspaper, some cheap religious

reproductions, and some photographs of young men in uniform. There was a crude shrine built on the wall with clay figures of the Virgin and the Sacred Heart. The woman was quite excited. The last well-dressed person to visit her had been Muñoz Marín, Popular leader of the Senate and Puerto Rico's top political figure, who several years ago visited nearly every rural section of the island to convince the *jibaro* that he could either have justice or could sell his vote—not both. In that election year the *jibaro* voted and the Popular party won overwhelmingly.

We explained that our mission was not political and that all information the Señora could give would be considered confidential. The interviewer began her questioning. Number of people living in the house—8; number of children—4; years married—5; monthly expenses—\$30; religion—Catholic; Church attendance—once in a while; how many more children wanted—none; pregnant—yes; occupations desired for children—doctor and engineer; what chance of attaining these—very little; would she like to move to some other place—yes, to the United States or San Juan; why—so her husband could be better employed and her children better educated; was birth control ever permissible—yes, for people who could not afford to have more children.

All other members of the household over 14 were interviewed too, the grandmother, an uncle, and Juan Dias himself. He was called in from the field—a deep-browed, short, tight-muscled man dressed in World War II khaki trousers and a World War I hat. He brought with him a handful of bananas and divided them among us. We could have them at lunch. The woman prepared coffee on a wood-burning stove. An old guitar and a pair of maracas were in a corner of the room, and the interviewer picked up the guitar and handed me the maracas. We

sang several songs and when it was time to go we tucked the bananas in our brief cases and struggled down the steep hill. The children who had previously been peeping shyly from another room now ran excitedly out of the house and shouted, “Good-bye, Americano! Good-bye, Americano!” until we were out of sight.

While I can hardly say that all other interviews were as instrumental or as pleasant, the generosity and friendliness of the Puerto Rican farmer are characteristics which appeared almost a hundred per cent true. Equally characteristic were the responses to our questionnaire. Contrary to the prevailing pseudo-opinions and rationalizations, the Puerto Rican peasant is not just a hard-working, bovine individual who is poor and uneducated but who is content because he knows no better. In these rural homes there is almost universally filth, overcrowding, disease, defective education, and undernourishment; but nowhere did I find people who were either too unintelligent or too supine to realize this and to want to do something about it. Although the results of the Study have not yet been mechanically tallied, I have gone over the questionnaires of half of the 6,000 households covered, and the patterns are clear cut. These are a people who would improve themselves if they could—financially, educationally, physically. What is in their way?

Overpopulation: The population problem in Puerto Rico has been so talked up by scholars and journalists, the impression is often left that the inhabitants are or soon will be falling off the edges of the island, and that rather than do this they choose to migrate to New York. Such is hardly the case. While it is true that, were the United States populated at an equal density, it would contain

over one-and-a-half billion people, it is equally true that New Jersey has the same density of population as Puerto Rico and that Long Island peoples twice Puerto Rico's population in half the space. It is clear then that the island's problem is not to be conceived in absolute terms of living space, but in a relative manner. In this sense Puerto Rico (1) is overpopulated in relation to its resources and (2) its population is growing at a rate significantly higher than the other areas of the world. Regarding the latter, let us consider the facts of the island's natural increase (the balance of births over deaths), which is the second highest in the world. Whereas the rate per thousand is 11.5 in India, 6 in the United States, 3 in England, and .7 in France, Puerto Rico's natural increase is 21. The main reason for this high rate is the declining death rate. When American rule came to the island in 1898, sanitary techniques were immediately introduced and continued, and these have tremendously reduced the mortality rate; but since birth control has remained a negligible factor in the birth rate (due to the opposition of the Catholic Church, popular prejudice, and the absence of funds and information), fertility has remained constant. Fifty years ago the population was under a million; now it is over 2 million; and it is estimated that within another 40 years it will have exceeded 5 million.

But Puerto Rico's economy is an agricultural one (over 70 per cent of the insular income from exports is derived from sugar and its by-products), and the population must be considered in terms of this. Since three-fourths of the island is mountainous, it leaves but little arable land, approximately a half acre per person. More specifically, where in 1930 there were 809 persons per cultivable square mile (there were 221 in the United States), it is estimated that there will be

3,000 persons per square mile in 1960; and, unfortunately, there are few natural resources to rely on for an industrial revolution which might eventually raise the standard of living. Current estimates reveal that even with an extensive development of industry, the rate of population growth is so high it will continue to outrun the available resources.

I have confined my discussion so far principally to the lower class and incidentally to the aristocracy. There is, however, a small but growing middle class which is, as in most countries, the section of the populace that gets things done. In the cities of San Juan, Ponce, and Mayaguez, one finds the shopkeepers, officials, salesmen, doctors, etc. whose voices are most voluble in public affairs and whose neatly kept homes and well-dressed wives reflect their relative opulence. In the University town of Rio Piedras the intelligentsia can be found: the professors, teachers, and thinkers from whom emanate most of the sophisticated reasoning for a freer and richer Puerto Rico. I lived in both Ponce and Rio Piedras and found in each powerful main streams which contribute heavily to the total essence of the island.

Ponce, "La Perla del Sur," is an old and dry city on the southern coast. Here are located many of the oldest Spanish families of the island, and there is a fierce and aristocratic civic pride felt by its inhabitants who love to tell that they are a "Ponceño," even if their crack baseball team has just been defeated by San Juan. I found the inhabitants here more gracious and "simpatico" than in other urban areas of the island, and I felt almost instantly the "big town" spirit that seems absent in the other major cities. But "Ponceños" are also Puerto Ricans, and it was here that I was constantly cautioned to "speak and write well of



Puerto Rico," for I was usually reported to be a novelist or correspondent. It was in Ponce that I was told why many Puerto Ricans dislike Americans—the Americans adopted the conqueror attitude in 1898 and have never abandoned it. They have brought better schools, roads, and sanitation to the island but they never seem to forget it in dealing with "the natives." Economically speaking, they smothered Ponce's infant shoe industry by a drastic cut in American shoe prices, and did the same to the other insular industrial ventures. They have forbidden trade with other nations of the world and have charged exorbitant shipping rates on the exports from the American continent. Even the *jíbaro's* diet of rice, beans, and dried codfish is imported, and yet the American sugar-quota system (which gives large quotas not only to Louisiana and Colorado sugar interests but to the Philippines and Cuba as well) forces the Puerto Ricans' sugar centrals to limp along at half capacity.

It was in Ponce, too, that I felt more emphatically the class-caste distinctions. One reads and hears that there is none of this on the island, yet I found that an out-of-class marriage keeps a man away from the city's upper-class club, and anyone "de color" could not even be considered. This is true (despite law) in the better night clubs on the whole island, and, although there is no educational segregation (one third of the population are clear-cut Negroes), there are informal discriminations practiced in the University.

Still, my several months in Ponce were the most pleasant in Puerto Rico. Despite a rather severe moralistic outlook and a townish tendency toward gossip, I found the people there most cultivated and agreeable. My only discomfort was suffered because of the location of my room on a city corner. What is said of Puerto

Rican drivers I found to be distressfully true—they blow their horns for sheer joy!

From Ponce to the University town of Rio Piedras is close to four hours by car and 20 minutes by plane. By car one gets the specific things which yield the insular flavor—roast-pig and cane-juice stands, and grimy grocery store-bars along the road, the fabulously beautiful color contrasts in the deep wayside gorges, the vociferous, slam-bang *público* drivers who shout lusty "*Buena suerte's*" (Good luck) to each other as they approach a precipitous curve—but it was from the air that I saw the Puerto Rico few Borinquens ever see. I saw the tiny shanties with the patch of garden and a few lean cows that dot the sides and even peaks of incredibly steep mountains; farms separated by at least a day's walk. These hill people are the ones who are said to move into the slums every time a new housing project leaves slum sections temporarily vacant, and there are some of these who, like the hill people of certain sections of our South, live and die without having seen the interior of a church or school.

Back in Rio Piedras one again finds a thriving middle class, but this is also the intelligentsia. A government institution, the University of Puerto Rico grants liberal scholarships which make it possible for many good students from the lower class all over the island to study without working. Interestingly enough, very few of these students live in dormitories (there is only one), and the campus cafeteria is open only until the afternoon. It was explained that the students do not like dormitories—they prefer to board with a family and literally to become adopted by that family. Three students roomed at the house where I stayed in Rio Piedras, and at Christmas gifts were exchanged as if these students were immediate members of the family. An instructor related to me, "The worst



## PUERTO RICAN STRENGTH

part of my stay in America was my room. I lived there for a year, and not once did the lady of the house invite me to dinner. Here we could not let a person walk through the dining room without asking him to join us in a meal."

The University is in a sense the focal spot of the island. It is the center for concerts, plays, and lectures. The opinions and political influence of the brilliant young rector, Jaime Benitez, affect the thoughts and policies of many insular politicians, while other university professors are consulted as experts by an education-conscious government. PhD's are not so rife here as on an Ivy-League campus, but what is lacking in degrees seems compensated for in spirit. Seldom on an American campus can be seen such interest in the student as an individual, and seldom can be found students who are so sophisticatedly aware of social and political problems, and so intensely interested in doing something about them. This intensity is occasionally carried to extremes: recently students have been jailed and expelled for pulling down the American flag, storming the president's office in order to force a resignation, etc. However misdirected this energy may be, it seems to me to be a strength that can be developed and channeled toward more constructive ends.

In Rio Piedras I was introduced to the Puerto Rican fiesta. I found parties pleasantly uninhibited, noisy, violently "rumbaish," and abundant with rum. Between my exhausting attempts at guarachas and rhumbitos, however, I learned many of the opinions concerning continentals and independence that would have gone unsaid were the daylight censorings of the superego at work. From a girl in the government service I learned that from her experiences in a New York City university she believed Americans to be a dirty people who lick their fore-

finger before turning a page, dab a saliva-moistened Kleenex over stale cosmetics, and take an insufficient number of showers. From a fervid University student I heard that continentals had no right to be proud of the strength of their nation. It had been given by God in the way of a huge, fabulously natural-resourced region. When the pioneers came to America, the wealth was hanging like shining apples from a tree, and whenever they exhausted this wealth or produced too many children to share it adequately, they moved on to another orchard. Puerto Rico has neither orchards nor space. If one moves, one must move to New York.

Here, too, the center of the growing Independencia Party, I heard the intellectual reasoning for independence, but heard enough as well to ascertain the emotional grounds for such a desire. Overtly one hears that a free Puerto Rico could develop her industry and protect it with a tariff; could be free of the quota system and could sell both sugar and industrial products to other nations of the world while simultaneously profiting by buying from these nations without the costs of discriminative shipping rates, etc. But one comes to feel after a while that although these arguments are believed, there are deeper reasons for the vehemence against American rule. Rule by a distant power of a different race is an affront to the Borinquen's delicate sense of *dignidad*. Puerto Ricans had a centuries-old Spanish culture when the Americans arrived—a culture in which were firmly imbedded proud and aristocratic ideals about government, education, and social relations. Americans disregarded these traditions and established things the way *they* thought they should be done; all this accompanied by the tacit and usually not so tacit assumption that here was a way of life which had been proved superior. Specifically the islanders

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feel the halter of the foreign culture restricting them in such ways as these: the laws passed by the insular legislature are subject to the veto of the Congress or the President of the United States and by the Governor of Puerto Rico, who along with the auditor, attorney-general, superintendent of public education, and insular supreme court justices are named by the President of the United States; and the island so dominated by continental authority has no voting representative in Congress. It is such grievances as these which make the Puerto Rican bitter about American rule, grievances which I feel are the basis for the vigorous rationalizations and campaigns for independence. Clearly it is emotional grounds which prompt such a statement as "We would rather starve free than be fed in chains."

As the four-motored giant rose from San Juan and I could see the smooth foamy line of the Lucillo reef slowly diminishing, I wondered if there was any pattern to the confused medley of hues I recalled from my six months in Puerto Rico. In the ten hours that followed before reaching La Guardia field, the hypnotic ocean blue helped realign these rather chaotic impressions into the sharp black-and-white configurations which I feel best characterize the island. Rich and poor, Spanish and American, beauty and ugliness, primitivism and civilization—these are the sharp contrasts that are found with little intermediate shading. It is the palatial Condado section with its back-yard slum; the modern well-kept homes of Rio Piedras situated on unpaved streets down which cows and goats occasionally roam; the modern and efficient government offices in a city with a defective and unsanitary water supply.

And where the cultures meet there is a strange and almost self-conscious mixture, a kind of potpourri in which only some of

the original culture has been discarded, and only some of the new culture adopted. Chaperoned girls watch American cinematic love-making and discuss the content derived from the Spanish captions. For dinner they have *asopaos* or *arroz con pollo* but in the drugstore they order milkshakes and chocolate sundaes. At school they hear lectures in Spanish and study from English texts, at church wear the "new look" with their hand-made mantillas. On Saturday nights they informally parade around and around the plaza en masse to elicit from the observing males the Spanish exclamation but the American whistle.

The country is absorbing as much as it can of the high-powered and mechanized American culture, yet both consciously and unconsciously it is attempting to keep from being absorbed by a system basically foreign to its own humanistic culture. The cries for independence, the indignation against Americans, the arguments for economic self-sufficiency stem largely, it seems to me, from a wounded pride and a fear of extinction of a way of life highly valued by the Borinquen.

This, too, is a kind of energy or spirit which can be highly beneficial to Puerto Rico. It is directly related to what the island government is now trying to do: build Puerto Rico into the kind of nation that needs neither sympathy, financial assistance, nor technical aid from the United States. At present the government is heavily taxing the rich and doing much to divide the available land space more equitably. It is financially and morally encouraging the development of such industries as pottery and glassware, cement products, plastics, furniture, etc., the raw materials for all these being indigenous to the island. It sponsors through the University numerous projects to investigate the mechanics

## PREJUDICE

of insular finance, trade, income, population, social organization, etc. An intelligent emigration program has now started, directing prospective emigrants to more favorable locations; and adult education is being stressed. Government-financed students are sent annually to the continent with the idea of supplanting eventually the American technicians in Puerto Rico.

More hopeful than anything else is the zeal and willingness of the Puerto Ricans to do something about their problems. It is this spirit which is reflected in the remark made to me by a Puerto Rican professor: "Your statisti-

cians compile columns of figures to demonstrate the paucity of our resources, but you forget that five men on paper do not equal five men who are willing to work and to fight for what they believe and deserve. We believe we have two million of that kind of people."

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Readers of recent issues of CG will remember J. Mayone Stycos as author of the series of pieces on the "Spartan Greeks of Bridgetown." During the summer Mr. Stycos has been a psychiatric social worker and assistant psychologist at Willard, New York, State Hospital.

## PREJUDICE

SARA KING CARLETON

*This seed so small, so undefined  
At first implanting in the mind,  
Seems an inconsequential thing  
Until it comes to blossoming,  
Till, leafed and grown through flower to fruit,  
Close-webbed in fiber and in root,  
With wiry tangles, meshed and taut,  
It crowds across the brain; and thought  
That needs clean soil and light and air  
Dies in the dry rot stagnant there.*

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Sara King Carleton, a Connecticut poet, last appeared in COMMON GROUND in the Spring 1947 issue.

# SHAKESPEARE AND I

MIKHAIL JELEZNOV

AFTER the October Revolution, my family, for reasons of health, decided to leave Russia and go to America. How we were going to accomplish this, no one knew. It was impossible to leave Russia and just as impossible, probably, to enter the USA.

But very correctly we all reasoned that it was no use worrying simultaneously over two things. We decided to concentrate on how to get out of Russia and worry afterwards about America.

My contribution to the general plan was a determined effort to become an American Yankee in the shortest possible time. Somewhere I discovered an old dilapidated book entitled "English Self-Taught—A Short Course in the English Language, Grammar and Composition with Exercises, A Glossary and Phonetic Pronunciation of Words."

We all expected to leave for America in the "very near future." That was a convenient time, if somewhat indefinite and vague. My English book contained 250 pages, and I set myself the goal of memorizing daily  $4\frac{1}{2}$  pages so as to become an English-speaking person in about sixty days and be ready for America at the first call.

The "very near future" turned out to be several years. Our collective health deteriorated, but the profound knowledge of the English language I managed to acquire did help me get along in this world and almost catapulted me into the Foreign Service of the young Soviet Republic. But this is an entirely different story.

Each day I memorized  $4\frac{1}{2}$  pages of "English Self-Taught"—words, rules, exceptions, nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, the names of all the British kings, and poems by Wordsworth, Shelley, and Milton.

The technique of pronunciation did not come easily, but I followed the golden rule that no word in the English language should be pronounced the way it is spelled. This was of tremendous help to me.

I had certain difficulties with the letters *тн* but overcame them by diligent practice before a mirror. I scrupulously followed all the rules set down in "English Self-Taught" and finally discovered that they were very simple. All I had to do was roll up my tongue in the shape of a cup, push it up front, place it between my front teeth, then easily and effortlessly throw it out and say *тн*. At first my tongue would emerge too far into the open, but eventually I learned to control it and the entire procedure of pronouncing *тн* took no more than two minutes.

The pronunciation of the rest of the letters of the English alphabet was considerably easier and less troublesome. The book told me exactly when to pronounce the letter *ε* like an *ε* upside down, or like an *ε* downside up, or one laid flat on its stomach. It also told me when to pronounce the letter *Λ* like an *Λ* with a hyphen over it, or under it; the letter *т* like *ш*; *с* like *з*; *ч* like *ф* or like nothing at all.

From one of my friends whose aunt lived in America I had learned about cer-

tain peculiarities of the English language as spoken in the United States. My textbook, of course, gave only the English, or Oxford, pronunciation of words, which, my friend said, would not do for America. I fully agreed with him. After all, we did plan to go to America, and not to England, and the Oxford pronunciation was of no earthly use to me. I wanted to speak American English. So I eliminated all the letters *r* from my vocabulary, for the Yankees, I was told, never pronounce the letter *r* and easily recognize a foreigner by the way he rolls his *r*'s.

Within three months I spoke English fluently. I knew the meaning of every word in the book and pronounced them with an impeccable American accent. To the great awe and delight of my family and friends, I was able to recite by heart two poems by Wordsworth, one by Shelley, and a number of passages from "Paradise Lost."

That year I did not go to Petrograd, which had not yet become Leningrad, to study at the university. My parents prevailed upon me to stay at home: did we not expect to go to America in the very near future?

I remained with the family. My fame as an English scholar spread far and wide. Several friends who also expected to go to the United States (everyone dreamed of going to America, and if the Russian government had relaxed its exit rules and the American government its entry rules, the entire population of Russia, that is one hundred and eighty million people, would have migrated to the New World) —these friends asked me to teach them the English language. I found it very profitable. My rates, as behooved the only English-speaking person in a small Russian town, were high, even exorbitant:

a quarter of a pound of sugar, or three-quarters of a pound of bread, or one-eighth of a cake of soap per four lessons. Among my pupils was a young actor who expected an affidavit from a distant cousin in America and wanted to recite in the original English language Hamlet's monologue "To be or not to be."

I had a difficult job with him: my actor just would not learn how to pronounce *tr* the way it said in the book, and he obstinately insisted upon rolling his *r*'s. I finally gave up in despair and let him declaim Hamlet's monologue with an Oxford accent instead of an American one.

What happened to my pupils I do not know. But when we finally did arrive in this country and were met by a group of hitherto unknown relatives, I, of course, immediately addressed them in my best American English.

They listened to me attentively. Finally one of them said sadly—in Russian—"You know, I left Russia thirty years ago and never realized how profoundly the language has changed. You probably speak the new Soviet Russian. We will have a difficult time understanding each other until you learn some English."

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*Mikhail Jeleznov is a Russian-born writer who came to the United States in the mid-twenties, attended New York University, free-lanced for Russian publications, and did odd jobs in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, and other American cities. He is now news editor of the New York Russian-language daily, Novoye Russkoye Slovo, for which he also writes a daily humorous column. His most recent Russian book is The Eastern Hero, a satire in verse on dictators and dictatorships.*

## UNDER ANY FLAG

MILLA Z. LOGAN

As ANKA read the letter she had written on cheap, lined tablet paper to her mother in the old country, she knew she would never mail it.

It had been like having a hot swelling go down to get these complaints out of her system; to break down and name Mama Pearla, her mother-in-law, for what she was. A bossy, spying, old woman who steamed letters open and hid the pantry keys.

She had worked for three hours over this letter. Her right hand was still cramped from bearing down hard with her pencil on the oilcloth-covered kitchen table. For the first time since she had come to this house as a bride she paid no attention to the wall rappings which were her mother-in-law's way of telling her to go to bed and stop wasting electricity.

The letter to her mother had used up almost half the tablet. Now as she read it over she saw that she had written too little. There was not enough in these pages to make her mother understand the trouble she had. There was nothing here, she realized helplessly, that would strike her mother as unusual. She would say these were the disturbances you could expect when you lived under the same roof with your mother-in-law.

In the old country it was a mother-in-law's place to rule her oldest son's house and to boss his wife in big and little things. The wife stood it cheerfully, knowing that most of the young matrons in the village were in her boat and that some-

day it would be her turn to be mother-in-law.

Anka chewed on the end of her pencil and considered how she could change the letter to say what she felt. It wouldn't be enough to show how this kind of treatment didn't sit so well in America. There was something else that she couldn't explain to her mother because it escaped her like a half-remembered dream. She stared hard at each object in the kitchen as if it could jog her brain. She looked a long time at the wooden sink boards, scrubbed and bleached every day with strong smelling Javel water that ate through your apron if you spilled a drop. The white porcelain she had seen in neighbors' kitchens had seemed as jaunty as America itself. Simo admired it too and he wanted Anka to have it. No matter if there was a Depression after what had happened to the stock market, people still had to eat meat. His butcher shop was doing a fair business. He himself had white tile trimmings in the shop, and he gave Anka his word for it that they were a great invention.

But Mama Pearla banged her fist on the wooden sink board and said, "No." She said a great deal more, much of which Anka had heard before. "Just let it be made in America and for you two it is made of gold. Even if they made it of goats' whiskers and bay leaves." She stroked the wooden sink board protectively and glared at Anka. "I will care for these boards myself," she said. "Until



I die. I will make it my business to keep them as white and smooth as the sands of the Adriatic."

Anka's glance passed from the drain boards to the window over the sink. In day dreams she hung starched red and white curtains on them. Once she had brought a sample piece of curtain material home but Mama Pearla had put her foot down on the idea.

"If the American donkey cuts a hole in the seat of his pants that doesn't say that we have to bare our behinds, too. Besides," she pointed to a screened cupboard outside the window, "I don't want curtains flapping in my face every time I



open the window to put a piece of cheese away."

Anka looked resentfully at the cupboard. In the outside darkness it pressed like a big bat against the windowpane.

Anka had never thought of anything as expensive as a white, electric icebox, but she and Simo had spoken of a small wooden box that would hold ice. Mama Pearla thought that was an unhealthy way to keep food. She agreed that it was no use trying to keep beer cool in the window cupboard, but it was her opinion that there was no way to make a bottle icy except to lower it into an old-country well.

It came to Anka suddenly that Mama Pearla was not fighting her, but something bigger, something more threatening than a daughter-in-law.

Anka couldn't see how Mama Pearla could hate her. It had been her own idea that Simo go back to the old country for a bride. She often told Anka how she had said, "I don't want any of this American-born trash cluttering up my house. It makes no difference to me if their parents were born in the old country. A girl who is born here, she has the idea that she came out of her mother's womb with a crown on."

It was Mama Pearla who suggested to Simo that he go to Anka's family for a bride. Mama Pearla and Anka's mother had been friends in the old country. In the six years since Mama Pearla had followed her oldest son to America they never missed writing each other on St. Stefan's Day.

"Obey your mother-in-law as you would me," Anka's mother had said to her a hundred times before she and Simo left for America. "I don't want ever to hear that you have gone against her wishes."

Anka's eyes dropped to the cerise enamel on her nails and to the English grammar on the kitchen table.

Only twice, she thought, only twice have I broken that promise.

Once was soon after she arrived in America. Mama Pearla, she found the first time they went to market, spoke no English. She boasted about it. Simo knew

a great many words and spoke easily to his American customers. But Simo spoke by ear and Anka was one who even if she cut out a straight-lined slip wanted a pattern. She wanted a book so that her words would fit well.

Mama Pearla was disgusted, but even her prying eyes couldn't catch Anka in the act of studying her book. She had a lot to say, though, about people who wanted to learn English. "Look at me," she boasted. "Five years in this country and I don't know ten words of English. Show me somebody who gets along any better."

"You don't go to the markets," Simo protested. "You don't speak to the neighbors, you don't . . ."

"And a good thing, too," his mother broke in. "If I spoke English my mouth would never get a rest. I would wear it out answering silly talk from the neighbor ladies. In America people talk to everybody."

"They are friendly," Simo said simply.

But his mother wasn't listening. She had her eyes on Anka who was stringing beans. Unless she was watched, Anka sometimes threw out the bigger, tougher beans.

When she defied her mother-in-law and painted her nails red, Anka felt better about a great many things. The brilliant gloss on her nails was the only part of her appearance that hadn't been passed on by Mama Pearla. The old lady went with her to buy her clothes, and if a neck was too low or a color on the gay side she put on such a show that Anka had to give in. Otherwise the American salesgirls would think there was something wrong with the old lady's head. It was the same way with Anka's light fine hair which she wore in doughnuts over each ear. Instead of braiding smoothly, the fine, uneven lengths bristled untidily and gave her a great deal

of trouble. She would have liked to cut and wave her hair, but if she did it would only mean that Simo would have to come home to scenes and rages.

She hoped, guiltily, that the rappings on the wall tonight weren't keeping him awake. She ignored the last outburst and went on reading the letter. She had come to the part that was heavily underlined.

"And now, Mamitza," she had written, "this you will not believe. Nothing suits Mama Pearla in America but the cinema. She would go *three nights* a week, if she could, to see the actors and actresses hugging and kissing, shooting guns and driving fast automobiles. Once a week, sometimes twice, if the Frenchman Chevalier is playing, Simo takes her to the cinema in our neighborhood. Would you believe it, Mamitza, I have been there *only three times*, in the two years (come next month) that I am in America? When Simo takes his mother she says *someone* must stay home to take care of the house. Naturally, he and I cannot go together and leave an old woman in the house by herself at night."

Mamitza will think this is silly, Anka thought. She will write back, "Be patient, the cinema will be there a long time. Your time will come someday."

She heard her mother-in-law's bony knuckles rapping again, but she went on reading. When she was finished she flung the letter down, scattering the sheets. She was cross with herself because she hadn't stated the facts so her mother could see that her life with Mama Pearla was an unnatural trial.

The one thing that could make her see, she thought, unconsciously picking up her pencil, she couldn't write. It was too early to tell her mother that she was going to have a baby in seven months. That would give Mamitza a long time to yearn and fret for her.

But she had told Mama Pearla yesterday. She told because she thought the news would soften her and make her agreeable.

The two were in the kitchen finishing their breakfast coffee. Anka stood at respectful attention beside the stove where she could quickly reach the coffee pot when the old lady signalled for another cup.

"Simo said," she spoke formally, "that as one woman to another it was my place to tell you the news. We will have a child in seven months."

The old lady gulped down her coffee and showed some surprise in her widened eyes.

"It took you long enough," she said looking accusingly at Anka's flat stomach. "When I was married as long as you I couldn't get through the door."

In her confusion Anka almost laid a hand on the hot stove. She hadn't expected this. Even the meanest mother-in-law in the old country was gentle with a son's wife who was with child.

"When did you say?" Mama Pearla asked.

Anka was too close to crying to answer.

Mama Pearla dunked and swished a lady finger in her coffee. "It will be something new," she said, dangling the dripping pastry over her mouth, "for a grandmother to have a grandchild she can't talk to. Because," she explained when Anka looked puzzled, "here in America the children are too good to speak the language of the old country."

"We will teach him," Anka said, earnestly. "Believe me we will."

"Hah!" the old lady snorted. "You will teach him. It will be a race to see who will be the biggest American." She left the table abruptly and walked out of the room.

Anka felt then for the first time that

what stood between her and her mother-in-law was bigger than the differences that usually came between a woman and her husband's mother. Tonight, looking about this shabby kitchen, that feeling came back to her. Her eyes went back again to the bleached white wood of the sink board, and it came to her in words what was eating Mama Pearla. She is fighting America through me, she suddenly realized. She is afraid because I will have children who are American.

The discovery upset her. This was why Mama Pearla had turned more unfriendly since she heard about the baby. Today the old woman had cooked cabbage for five hours with all the windows shut tight. In Anka's condition the sour smell and the hot cooking vapors made her sick. "Eh, it is not all joy, having a baby," the old lady smirked every time Anka ran to the bathroom. She was getting ready to cook cabbage again tomorrow even though they never ate it two days in succession.

"That settles it," Simo said when he came home and saw what the cabbage cooking had done to Anka. "She will go to my older sister's in Denver. Mother or no mother, I will not stand for her unkindness to you."

"No," Anka said with all the force she could summon. They couldn't do this. Her mother, her brothers, Simo's brothers, all their relatives in the old country could never hold up their heads again if Simo sent his mother from his house. She could hear the postmistress taunting the men of Simo's family: "So it's the wife who wears the pants in America."

"No, Simo," she said as if she were taking an oath. "It will work itself out."

But she had little faith in her words. She was twenty, Simo was thirty-five, and his mother was sixty-five. Simo's grandmother, Mama Pearla's mother, had lived

to be ninety-seven. There could be long years of this ahead unless something unexpected happened.

The old lady was knocking on the wall, feebly this time as if she had just come out of a sound sleep. Anka gathered the scattered pages of her letter and burned them in the stove. She picked up her tablet, pencil, and grammar book and turned off the light just as the knocks began to get louder.

Mama Pearla was the first one up next morning. It was six o'clock when she rattled the lids on the kitchen stove and started a fire. Anka was up all night, studying her English book, she thought, noticing the pencil marks on the oil-cloth.

She banged the stove lids again and knocked on them with the iron poker. In the old country even officers' wives didn't sleep this late. She lifted the poker once more and beat it against the tea kettle before bringing it down on the stove lids. She kept this up until her daughter-in-law rushed into the kitchen with her house dress still unbuttoned at the side.

After that she settled down to look at the paper and to wait for her first cup of coffee.

When her son came in, he barely spoke to her. In the old country he would have kissed her and asked how she spent the night. He bent his curly black head over the paper, looking the same to her as the little boy who had studied his catechism in the stone-floored kitchen back home. His wife, Anka, stood beside him pouring his coffee. Once, when she bent over to read something he pointed out in the paper, their heads came together. One as black as old-country loam and the other like the sun, they made a beautiful picture. How proud she would

be if she could show them off in the church or the market square at home!

When Simo left for his butcher shop and Anka went to market, she felt lonely. She sat at the kitchen table contemplating the long day ahead. There was very little work here in America to occupy a woman's hands. And very few pastimes, too, when you came down to it. Back home you could fish almost out of your kitchen window and you could always raise twenty or more friends just by whistling.

Mama Pearla glanced out the window over the sink and saw a frame of blue sky beyond the screen cupboard. Good weather to go dandelion picking, she thought. A long time since they had had a dandelion salad. She hesitated, wondering if Anka would remember what vegetables to put in the soup. She wouldn't want to be taken for one of these new-style mother-in-laws who showed no interest in their sons' homes. She would leave a note reminding Anka not to leave out the leek, even if she did put in onion.

She found a crumpled paper bag for the dandelion greens in the wood box. Fortunately Simo was a butcher so there was a good selection of pointed, sharp knives. In this clay-packed soil you needed a knife with a strong point for digging. She picked a wooden-handled butcher knife with a polished steel margin of sharpness on its blade.

When she was ready, she threw a fringed shawl over her shoulders and walked out into the sun. As she went toward the park, many people turned to look at her—a tall, stoop-shouldered woman, with trailing skirts and thin gray hair that barely covered her scalp. A severe-looking old woman carrying a sharp knife, point forward.

Mama Pearla was so elated with the idea of the dandelion hunt that she

noticed no one. She made her way through the neighborhood's shopping center and crossed in the middle of the street to look at the colored pictures in front of the moving picture theater where Simo always took her. An automobile that almost ran her down made her so angry she brandished her knife at the driver.

The signs on the theater showed that the Frenchman Chevalier with his straw hat would be there tonight. That was something to look forward to. A person could expect to see anything in these moving pictures. Ships afire, bank robberies, train wrecks, kings' palaces, talking animals, and who knew what next? For two hours they lifted you out of the world. Plainly they were for mature minds only, for settled characters. Otherwise they could be a bad influence. Simo being a man could stand up to these sights even though he didn't have the age and experience. But how embarrassed she would be many times if Anka sat in the darkened theater beside her.

When she left the theater lobby, Mama Pearla went directly to the Park. The dandelion leaves grew outside the fence in a not-so-well-tended border of grass. She dropped to her knees on the curbing and searched for the flat clumps of ragged leaves. She followed the border for two blocks but found no more than a few clumps too tough for eating. At the end of the third block, with her luck still against her, she came to a Park entrance. She looked down the bench-lined avenue that led to the other side of the Park and decided to cross over. She had worked this side so many times there were no new tender clumps to pick.

She had never been on the other side of the Park, except once to a wake. It was not so very different or frightening, and the dandelion was young and abundant. She worked several blocks of the

border, filled her bag, loosely, and decided from the stiffness in her knees that it was time to quit.

The way home, she remembered, was to go back to the Park exit and follow the crossing to the other side. At the opposite



entrance there was a sign showing an almost naked woman in a bathing suit. But when Mama Pearla reached the other side the sign wasn't there, only a small white church that she had never seen before. It could happen to anyone, she decided. The exits, all looking alike, confused a person. It was natural to pick the wrong one. She simply had not come up far enough before crossing. This landed her at the wrong entrance on the other side. And so she followed the Park fence, looking for the entrance that had the sign with the naked woman.

When Mama Pearla passed two more

entrances without seeing the sign, she knew she was lost. Lost, without carfare, or a hat on her head, or a language to ask questions with. She clutched the knife fiercely trying to remember the few English words she knew.

"No cantelopies, no str-r-rawbarry ripe, today." That was what she said to peddlers when she slammed the door in their face.

She knew the numbers in her address but not in English. The street she lived on was hard to pronounce unless you had all your teeth in front.

Fortunately she remembered she knew the word for cinema. If she could manage to make someone understand that she wanted to go to the "show" she could find her way home from there.

A young, hatless woman, with a child in a baby buggy and another trailing along on a tricycle, was entering the Park when Mama Pearla decided to try out her plan.

One of the English words she knew was "Hey." She shouted it to attract the young woman's attention. At the same time she waved her knife like a traffic policeman motioning pedestrians on.

The young woman wheeled her buggy around, seized the handle bars of the tricycle, and ran across the street like light artillery in retreat.

Mama Pearla stayed where she was, feeling certain that someone who could understand her would come along. Many people passed on the other side of the street but no one crossed over to the Park entrance. Mama Pearla waved with her knife. She pointed it inquiringly in all directions, and called out "Show? Show?" She shrugged her shoulders helplessly when no one answered.

She was about to cross the street when she heard footsteps grating on the gravel walk behind her. She looked around and

saw a tall policeman in a blue uniform. Before she could speak to him, he grabbed her by the wrist, forcing her to drop the knife in pain.

"Show, show," Mama Pearla pleaded, but the policeman answered her angrily. He tore the paper bag out of her hands, spilling the dandelion greens. When she bent over to save them, the policeman pulled her back roughly. He examined the knife and asked her a question.

As if it were in a bad dream Mama Pearla could see she was in serious trouble. The gendarme thought she had the knife for evil purposes. In America gendarmes didn't know about digging for dandelion greens.

She wrung her hands and held them out to show that they were innocent of blood, but the gendarme was not impressed.

He took her by the arm and escorted her across the street. Where was he taking her? To jail? In a moving picture she had seen an innocent man spend thirty years in prison for a murder another committed.

Just to be seen walking up the street with a gendarme shamed Mama Pearla so that she shook all over and felt light in the knees. These people who looked at her with such curiosity thought that she was a common woman with no standing in this country. If they could see her big son waiting on his American customers in his butcher store. Or her daughter-in-law who could speak educated English almost as well as a saleslady.

When they turned a corner, Mama Pearla saw that they were in the district where Anka marketed. Here, maybe, someone might recognize her and explain to the gendarme that she had a good home and respectable people.

She tried to lead the gendarme into a drugstore by pulling away from his grip on her arm, but he held more tightly and kept to his course. A half block off she



saw Varelli, the fruitman, rolling down his awning to keep the sun off his stands. She quickened her step to reach him before he went into his shop. The gendarme would not be hurried. Instead he stopped to chat pleasantly with a newsboy.

With her free arm she waved to Varelli. He was so surprised to see her with a gendarme that he waited in front until they passed his place.

Varelli must have been a good friend of the gendarme, because after they talked the gendarme let go of Mama Pearla's arm. Varelli pointed in the direction of her house. The gendarme slapped him on the back and they moved on again. Although they walked toward her house, Mama Pearla still couldn't make out if the gendarme was going to take her to jail. If he would only take her home first he would see that she was not a criminal. Anka could explain everything to him.

When they came in sight of home, Mama Pearla felt that not even the shuttered, narrow stone house in the old country could ever look so wonderful.

When the gendarme rang the bell Mama Pearla hoped he noticed the American Red Cross sign Anka had insisted on pasting in the glass panel of the front door.

Anka embraced Mama Pearla, showing that she had been worried about her. The gendarme spoke to Anka and made her laugh. She invited him into the parlor where he stood respectfully with his cap in his hand until Anka told him to sit down.

Mama Pearla looked at him triumphantly and pointed to Anka. He could see for himself what an up-to-date daughter-in-law she had. She could do a person credit in any American company. With her hair cut short she could almost pass for a moving picture actress.

The parlor was impressive too. Ameri-

can magazines and books to show that they were well-informed people. What a pity it would have been if the house had smelled of cabbage today.

When the gendarme was about to leave, Anka spoke to Mama Pearla. "I would like to offer him a glass of wine," she said.

Mama Pearla knew what her daughter-in-law meant. "The key to the pantry is in the coal bin, hanging on a nail in the back left-hand corner," she answered hastily. She was glad the gendarme couldn't understand her. She wouldn't want him to know that she hid the pantry key from her daughter-in-law.

They all had a glass of wine and the gendarme shook hands with them and left. You could see that he respected them, that the next time he saw Mama Pearla he would tip his cap.

"He knows now that I am no ignorant immigrant," Mama Pearla said to Anka as they washed the wine glasses.

"Certainly not," Anka said. She handed her mother-in-law the wine jug and the key to the pantry.

The old lady held a wine glass she was polishing to the light. "Leave it open. Why not?" she said, squinting at the glass. "Saves locking and unlocking it every few minutes."

Anka made coffee and they drank it without speaking.

"I am getting old," Mama Pearla said after a while. She slumped in her chair and spread her knees. "Picking a few dandelion greens tires me these days."

"You talk foolishly," Anka said.

The old lady shook her head. "I know how I feel." She raised herself slowly out of her chair. "I know I am in no shape to see the Frenchman tonight. You are young and healthy. You and Simo go tonight. You can tell me how it was in the morning."

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Anka said they wouldn't think of leaving her alone but Mama Pearla insisted. "I will call my friend the gendarme if there is trouble," she joked.

She got up from the table and started for her room. At the kitchen door she turned back and looked suspiciously at the pot of soup on the stove. She lifted the lid and sniffed it.

"Did you remember to put the leek in?" she asked.

"Yes, Mama Pearla," Anka answered

meekly. Inside, she felt no meekness. All she had was a safe, sure feeling that after this her mother-in-law "troubles" would be no worse than you would expect to have under any flag.

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*Milla Z. Logan's stories of Serbian Americans have appeared frequently in COMMON GROUND. She is the author of Bring Along Laughter, published by Random House in 1947. The illustrations are by Bernardine Custer.*



## THE LOGIC OF THE SEGREGATIONISTS

ARNOLD M. ROSE

SEGREGATION is being widely debated in the United States today. At one level, it is supported as a means of maintaining discrimination so that certain members of the majority group can gain personal advantage. This point of view must be argued in terms of the merit or lack of merit of discrimination, not of segregation per se, and so will not be considered here. At another level, segregation is supported at the same time as discrimination is condemned.

The latter point of view is taken for different reasons. Some persons realize that most discrimination is illegal and unjustifiable in terms of their personal code of ethics, but they are nevertheless strongly against racial intermixture. They believe that crossing of the races will lead

to biological degeneracy and social decay, and therefore want to reduce the occasions when members of different races might meet in equal social relations which might lead to personal attraction. Let us call this Position I. Again, some people are against discrimination but in favor of segregation because they believe that cultural development occurs by means of the promotion of diversity. When people are kept apart, they can build their unique culture forms, some of which have great social value. If people are not segregated, they argue, there will be a common dead level of culture in which each person will be cut in the same mold as any other. This Position II was most highly developed by the "parallel civilizations" school of southern writers during the

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1890s. A variant is that minority groups should be segregated because they prefer it that way themselves—feeling comfortable only within their own group. Then, again, some people would agree with Position II that segregation promotes a more fertile culture, but they consider segregation imposed on a minority group by a majority an insult and subject to abuse. They believe that segregation should be voluntary, or that it should be imposed by the minority groups themselves on their own members. This Position III is sometimes called the “national minorities” point of view. It is also sometimes called “cultural pluralism,” but we shall see that this is only one of two distinct attitudes which go under the name of cultural pluralism.

Certain logical inconsistencies are characteristic of all these positions insofar as they presume to separate segregation from discrimination. First, segregation involves a restriction on the equal privileges of citizens and therefore is inevitably tied to discrimination. Segregation has in fact nowhere existed without involving some measure of discrimination. This is partly true because there is not enough wealth to provide two or more equal sets of public or semi-public facilities. The southern states make only a pretense of providing equal library or park facilities for Negroes. There is no law which requires a restaurant owner or movie theater operator to offer equal service to Negroes, provided they can pay for the service, or even that there be at least a single restaurant or theater for Negroes in a business district. Few Negroes have the capital to build theaters and restaurants even where there is a Negro demand for them. And even should they be able to build them, nearby white property owners would object and keep the Negro out by private restrictive covenant. A segregated college for Negroes, in which a state invests a sum of

money proportionate to the amount it invests in a white college, is still not equal to the white college because it does not have the tradition, the reputation, the private gifts, the diversified teachers and student body that the white college has. Thus, segregation is not only expensive but it also does not permit equality.

Second, the principle of every man being free to choose his friends and associates becomes perverted when it is used as a basis of legal segregation. Mr. A can properly refuse to associate with Mr. B if he so chooses, but under the same principle he cannot prevent Mr. C from associating with Mr. B if he so chooses. Yet segregation thus operates to restrict the liberties of members of the majority who wish to associate with members of the minority. A white student at a southern college is prevented from having classroom discussion with Negroes and from meeting Negroes in athletic competition, even though he feels that this is a loss to him. Likewise, a white man who buys property in a restricted neighborhood is forever enjoined against selling or renting to Negroes, even though he takes a financial loss by limiting his service to whites.

Third, segregation causes discrimination by limiting opportunities. Housing segregation restricts the number of residences available to members of minorities, and this in turn restricts the number of job opportunities they have, since a person cannot move to another area to take a job unless he can find a residence there. While segregation in professional associations, service clubs and civic organizations is unquestionably legal, it creates discrimination by limiting professional and business contacts. It also reduces the probability of minority interests being included in the civic interests which are the concern of these organizations.

Social scientists generally have become

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aware of this connection between segregation and discrimination. In 1947, the Commission on Community Interrelations polled a representative sample of those anthropologists, psychologists, and sociologists who had ever done any studies of, or expressed interest in, intergroup relations or ethnic group characteristics. Over 60 per cent of the social scientists responded to the mailed questionnaire. They were first asked if they thought enforced segregation had a detrimental effect on minority groups, even if equal facilities were provided. Ninety-one per cent said it did. They were next asked if they thought enforced segregation had a detrimental effect on the majority group, even if equal facilities were provided, and the perhaps surprisingly high proportion of 83 per cent answered "yes." The scientists were then asked to indicate the sources of their information; most reported either their own research or the research of their colleagues.

The Supreme Court is also becoming aware of the inescapable connection between segregation and discrimination. Since the Constitution binds the Court to declare illegal any discriminatory action by the federal, state, or local governments, and since it must require that no government may restrict the privileges of any of its citizens (unless they are accused or convicted of crimes), the Court is now tending to rule against discrimination whenever it occurs.

Despite the social scientists and the Supreme Court, and the beginning of awareness on the part of the majority as to what it is doing to minorities by segregation, the three kinds of apologists for segregation are still propagandizing their positions. Let us have a look at the inconsistencies in their positions and the errors in their facts. The first position—that segregation is justified because it prevents amalgamation—is essentially a racist posi-

tion even though it is held by liberals who denounce discrimination. The position assumes that minorities belong to inferior races, that racial intermixture results in the degeneracy of the superior race. There is not one shred of scientific evidence for the belief that some races are biologically superior to others, even though a large number of efforts have been made to find such evidence. Also, all the studies show that the hybrid offspring of parents of different races are at least as strong, well-built, talented, and intelligent as either of their parents. Thus there is no factual support for the racist position. The position also makes one peculiar assumption—that members of minority groups are always extremely eager to marry members of the majority group. Actually, members of minorities are tending to draw more and more into their own group on such matters as marriage. Even when they do not, they exhibit no overwhelming desire for intermarriage. In the South, for example, while intermarriage does not exist, the non-marital liaisons that do exist in great numbers are nearly always broached by the white men and seldom by Negro men or women. Rape committed by Negro men on white women is extremely rare, but rape committed by white men on Negro women has—at various times—been common. These facts, coupled with the whole mythology of Negro sexual superiority that has been built up in the white South and has greatly fascinated so many whites, suggest that there is a repressed sexual interest on the part of the whites for the Negroes. It may be, of course, that the southern whites' fear of the consequences of their own sexual interest in Negroes makes them feel a need for segregation barriers—but this is beyond the scope of our discussion.

The second and third positions in favor of segregation claim that it is necessary

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for cultural development. The argument runs as follows: Anthropologists have demonstrated that one culture is as good as another, and that there is no such thing as an "inferior culture." Some cultures are, however, more developed in one aspect than other cultures, but usually not as well developed in other respects. The United States is blessed with people who have come from many different cultures, and therefore at least some people in this country are developing many more aspects of culture than would be true in a more homogeneous nation. If assimilation—or, as it is more popularly called, the "melting pot"—is allowed to go on, people will abandon their "native" culture and adopt a common, uniform, "dead level" American culture. Therefore people should not be allowed to assimilate. They should be segregated so that they can develop their "own" cultures, and each group can then appreciate the other's culture.

Some of those who expound this argument—those who follow what we have called Position Two—are from the majority group: They would forcibly segregate minorities so that the latter can develop their unique cultures. They can be charged with having racist attitudes also, since most believe there is something in the biological make-up of a group which leads it to develop a particular cultural form. Some of them claim segregation should be maintained because members of minority groups prefer it that way: "they like to be among their own kind." While this may or may not be true, the position is hypocritical since the segregationists do not leave it up to the members of the minority group to decide, but force segregation on them. Also, the segregationists do not want to segregate themselves, but only the minorities. In view of the logical inconsistencies of the forced segregationist, or parallel civiliza-

tions, position, it is apparent that the cultural argument is a mere rationalization: It is adopted by Southerners who are too liberal and moral to sanction discrimination, and who are too informed to believe that race mixture leads to biological degeneracy, but who nevertheless want segregation.

From among certain members of minority groups themselves has come the demand for segregation, also on grounds of segregation being necessary for cultural development. This is what we have called Position Three, and it differs from Position Two in that it would not have segregation imposed from the outside but rather by the minority group itself on all its members. While much of the onus of discrimination for the advantage of the discriminationist is removed, many of the effects of discrimination arising out of segregation remain. Certainly all the advantages of having free communication and contact with influential and interesting members of the majority group are curtailed. Further, segregation by group rule may be considered discrimination against those members of the majority group who wish to associate as equals with members of the minority. There are at least three different motivations for advocating segregation by group rule. One, some minority members secure advantages out of segregation (such as professional positions not in competition with the majority) and use the argument of cultural development as a rationalization to justify the securing of their personal interests. Again, some minority members are so bitter and resentful of the treatment they have received at the hands of the majority they wish to withdraw from as much intergroup contact as possible. They hold that segregation is necessary to maintain the minority group's mental health as well as its cultural superiority. This type of advocate of segre-

gation would disappear if discrimination at the hands of the majority group were to disappear. Third, some minority group members think their culture has a mystic superiority. They are heard to advocate its survival even if the members of the group are thereby harmed. While some of these advocates of segregation have devised strong social controls to prevent members of their group from associating with the majority group, their power cannot be too strong in a free United States.

Position Three is sometimes called cultural pluralism, but there is another type of cultural pluralism first fostered by such philosophers and educators as John Dewey and Horace Kallen, which we might call original cultural pluralism. This arose out of a feeling of need to combat the trend toward a "dead level of civilization," in which every individual would seem to be cut into the same superficial mold, characteristic of modern mass society. The other type of cultural pluralism arose out of a feeling that certain cultures should be made to survive and not be lost in the Americanization process. The latter point of view has developed into a whole mass movement, leaving the former to be expounded by a few intellectuals.

Original cultural pluralism is like Positions Two and Three in holding that minorities should develop their unique cultures. But they would not have segregation imposed either by majority group force or by minority group pressure. They would simply encourage minority group members to separate themselves voluntarily so they can develop the unique features of their culture uncontaminated by the "dead level" influence of American mass society. The original cultural pluralists do not advocate strict segregation either, since they would have the minority group "contribute" its unique cultural products to the larger American

society. It is true, of course, that some minority group members have a greater interest in the cultural past of their group, and have acquired more skills for developing that culture, than most members of the minority group. But other minority group members have not. There thus seems to be an inconsistency in the cultural pluralist's argument that all members of minority groups should develop that group's past culture, and yet that that development be free and voluntary.

A more consistent position would be that anybody should be allowed and encouraged to develop those aspects of culture in which he is most interested, and if these aspects of culture are those developed by his ancestors, well and good, and if not developed by his ancestors, also well and good. Otherwise, the logical conclusion of the cultural pluralist's position, as well as the cultural segregationist's position, is that Negroes should cultivate music and the dance rather than the intellectual disciplines—which should be developed by the Jews—"because their culture has taught them to do it so well." A cultural pluralism logically compatible with democratic ideals and not based on racism would be one which allows members of ethnic groups to leave the culture and group of their ancestors if they so desire, allows persons not born in an ethnic group to participate in the cultural development of that group if they so desire, and recognizes the existence of cultural groups not based on race or ethnic ancestry. Unfortunately, only a few of those calling themselves cultural pluralists today accept these principles, and therefore cultural pluralism must be charged with racism and a totalitarian spirit.

There are sharp differences in the way the majority has reacted to the cultural segregation of various minorities, and



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this has affected the form in which the minority culture has developed. To state the majority reactions in terms of the range, we may note that white Americans sponsor and pay for "Negro" music, dancing, and literature; that non-Irish Americans genially observe but do not participate in "Irish" St. Patrick's Day activities; and that Gentile Americans scorn "Jewish" synagogue chanting and use of gestures (although most of them like "Jewish" rye bread). As a consequence, Negroes are skeptical as to whether they should promote the arts lest this lead to further stereotyping and to cultivation of segregated economic positions. The Irish continue to celebrate St. Patrick's Day without questioning whether it should be stopped or stepped up. The Jews become defensive about their cultural forms: some try to escape identification with the practices, while others demand that they be encouraged and flaunted before the Gentiles. A democratic cultural pluralism, which presupposes the disappearance of racism, would lead all minorities to become like the Irish: the cultural forms would then be continued for their own value, and not argued over in terms of their effect on the majority group.

The variety and complexity of arguments for segregation, even on the part of those who condemn discrimination, show how deeply racism is imbedded in American and Western European civilization. Even the most careful scientist is likely to use the phrase "Negro blood" when he knows there is no such thing. Even many of the liberals who fight against discrimination assume a correlation between race and culture. Even leaders of the minority groups themselves point with pride to a dead cultural tradition or cite cases of persons of their own race or religion who have made outstanding achievements in another culture as showing what "we" can do.

The less sophisticated arguments for segregation—the ones that admit discrimination—allow for easier interpretation than the arguments considered in the preceding paragraphs. All reveal a racist premise. One frequent justification for segregation is simply in terms of personal antipathy. The prejudiced person says he does not like Negroes or Jews or Mexicans. The dislike of differences may be probed more deeply. Some of it is expressed in terms of not liking people who are not "Americans"—but this cannot be a satisfying explanation since the antipathy is extended to Indians, who are the original inhabitants of America, and to Negroes, whose ancestors have been resident in America longer than those of the average white man. But the mere fact that Indians and Negroes are not thought of as American indicates something of the nature of the feeling of difference.

Another variation of the "dislike of differences" argument is that certain minority groups—usually the Jews—are claimed to have sought and to have secured an undue amount of political and economic power. The Fortune poll of public opinion for October 1947 shows that 36 per cent of the American people think Jews have too much economic power, and 21 per cent believe that Jews have too much political power. Actually no minority group has much political or economic power, least of all the Jews among minority groups of significant size. Studies of attitudes toward Jews reveal that Jews are believed to be very influential in government and banking. Actually few Jews are successful in those fields, but are found in heavy numbers in clothing manufacture and entertainment, in which occupations the anti-Semites seldom conceive them to be.

Another type of argument for segregation with discrimination is that of whites

who say that they have an instinctive sexual repulsion to Negroes. Actually, illicit sex relations between the races have been standard in the South for hundreds of years, and there would be no need to set up barriers to interracial sex relations if such instinctive repulsion existed. Sometimes the repulsion is not claimed to be sexual, but to refer to physical contact. Again we note that the standard use of Negroes as servants, wet nurses, cooks, and waitresses in the South belies such a claim. Children of both races play together without display of repulsion until their parents draw them apart.

Social discrimination is the most hotly defended of all types of discrimination. It is usually justified as segregation, and many who feel they cannot justify discrimination are willing to defend segregation. But there is in fact no segregation without discrimination, nor can there be in theory. Each argument advanced in favor of segregation, and they are of many

diverse types, is contrary to fact or logic. There is something in common to all of them, however, and that is the assumption of racism—the biological superiority of certain races, the mystic need to keep races unmixed, the connection of race and culture. Thus, the attack on segregation is part and parcel of the attack on race prejudice, and there can be no compromise with one of them without also compromising with the other.

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## THE FRIENDS

JEAN PARADISE

BA-BA, BA-DA, be-bop, be-bop," Irv sang softly. He sauntered across the floor of the shipping room taking his time, his feet following an intricate rhythm which he hummed to himself. In his hand was a sheaf of express receipts.

In the center of the room Lonnie Jackson was piling cartons on a hand truck. As Irv passed, he snapped his fingers at Lonnie.

"Whatcha know, Joe?"

Lonnie straightened up, smiling, his teeth gleaming white against his black face.

"Must be tough, totin' round all them heavy papers," he remarked, shaking his head.

"Just got done unloading a truck," the white boy said. "Truck full of pianos."

"This here store don't sell pianos."

"Felt like pianos." Irv tapped his fingers on the top of a carton. "Ba-ba, ba-da, be-bop, be-bop, be-bop," he sang again.

"Well, whatcha know. Dizzy Gillespie!"

"Sure, my man Diz. What's wrong with him?"

## THE FRIENDS

"Nuthin', 'cept he ain't Louis Armstrong."

Irv started to walk away, but over his shoulder he said mournfully, "You can't expect no kind of sense from a horn player. No sense at all."

Lonnie smiled again as he bent down to pick up another carton. He was a strong boy with a muscular back and arms, but the cartons were heavy and he grunted as he lifted them. When he was through, he wiped the perspiration off his face with the sleeve of his work shirt, and then he began to push the hand truck across the busy, noisy, cavernous room, steering it around the piled-up crates and boxes. As he waited with his load in front of the freight elevator, Irv passed him again.

"So you still want to play Dixieland, huh?" Irv jeered. "Why, man, that's finished. There ain't nobody playing Dixieland anymore except guys like Armstrong and Teagarden, and they're too old to change. You gotta get hip to the real jive. Now you take Dizzy Gillespie—"

"You take 'im," Lonnie said. "He don't play jazz. He makes noise."

The elevator door grated open and Lonnie trundled his cartons inside.

"You're nuts," Irv shouted after him. "You don't deserve I should argue with you."

When Lonnie returned from delivering his cartons to the debutante shoe department, he found Irv sitting on the edge of one of the loading platforms unwrapping his lunch. Lonnie slid down beside his friend, allowing his long legs to dangle over the edge of the platform. Between himself and Irv he placed two half-pint bottles of milk, and without comment Irv handed over a chunky sandwich wrapped in waxed paper.

Lonnie took a huge bite out of his sandwich and began to chew contentedly.

"You remember the name of this?" Irv asked suddenly, pointing to the sandwich.

Lonnie peered between the slabs of bread at the red, spicy fish. He wrinkled his forehead. "Yeah, sure," he said triumphantly. "Gefilter fish."

"Lox," Irv said patiently. "Smoked salmon. Lox."

"Lox," Lonnie repeated.

"This is belly lox. My old lady buys the best."

"I remember the bread," Lonnie said grinning. "Hollah."

"Cholla. You gotta growl it down your throat."

Lonnie tried again, and Irv laughed so hard he almost rolled off the platform. When he regained his breath, he said, sputtering, "Just for that, you gotta eat another sandwich. Two more. I brought three apiece."

"If you ain't the eatingest skinny guy!"

"That's a fact, ain't it," Irv said modestly.

The sandwiches were generous and thick, and they reminded Lonnie of the white woman who made them, Irv's mother. She was a real nice, friendly woman. Irv had invited him home to dinner in Brownsville on several Friday nights, and Lonnie had accepted, at first shyly and then eagerly. Irv's mother and father had both been nice to him. Their apartment in the old-fashioned, rundown building had smelled deliciously of baking odors, and Irv had a room to himself with a battered old phonograph which they could play endlessly, without disturbing anybody.

"You coming to practice early tonight?" Irv asked, interrupting Lonnie's thoughts.

Lonnie looked unhappy. He averted his eyes and then said, "No, I reckon not, I got some other things to do."

## COMMON GROUND

A look of astonishment appeared on Irv's face. "You got other things? You kidding?"

"My mom and pop are comin' tomorrow."

"Yeah? From Alabama?"

"From Washington. They been stayin' a coupla weeks with my sister. I told you that."

"Sure, I know," Irv said. "So what's that got to do with tonight? They ain't coming tonight."

"I got to find a place for them to live, don't I?" Lonnie said angrily. "My landlady don't want no more roomers, and I can't give them my room on account of the other guy there. They shoulda stayed down there in Washington for a while."

"Hey, what's eating you?" Irv made a pacifying gesture. "You act like you don't want them to come," he added.

Lonnie turned on him savagely. "Why you sayin' that? Heck, didn't I go 'n send them my terminal leave pay? Didn't I tell Pop to do whatever he wanted with it? He paid up what he owed the landlord, and him and Ma got outa there. Should've done it a long time ago. I told him that when I came out of the Army. Nobody was goin' to make me stay home sharecropping. Man, no matter how hard you work, you end up broke. You a slave."

"So they got out," Irv commented softly. "So they're coming tomorrow."

"Yeah. And I can't find no room."

"You looked all over?"

"Sure. There's one place I'm aimin' to go back to tonight. The janitor said maybe there'd be a room empty. Folks don't stay there long, he said, they come and go, and he told me to come back tonight. It's an old beat-up house on 136th Street. I reckon nobody stays there any longer'n they can help it."

"I'll go there with you after work," Irv said. "You'll get the place and then

we'll hustle on down to practice. You ain't no Louis Armstrong yet. You ain't even no Dizzy Gillespie."

"Man, don't you wish that on me," Lonnie said, suddenly grinning.

"Why, the other night you was bopping along with all the rest."

"Hey, watch it," Lonnie sang out.

A truck was backing up to the loading platform, and both boys lifted their legs and scrambled up out of the way. There were still a few minutes left of their lunch time. Irv pulled a crumpled pack of cigarettes out of his pants pocket and offered one to Lonnie. With the cigarettes dangling from their lips, the two boys wandered outside to the street.

The store where they worked was a smart and exclusive women's specialty shop, with beautifully dressed and elegantly coiffured window dummies perpetually sneering out on 57th Street. On the 56th Street side, however, the rear of the store presented a grimy and commonplace spectacle of delivery trucks, boxes, crates, and sweating truckmen.

The boys leaned against the gray stone building, and Lonnie moved his back up and down to relieve a sudden itch. Then he frowned moodily at the sidewalk.

"Irv, I don't reckon you have to go down with me to that rooming house. I'll meet you later on, hunh?"

"What's the matter?" Irv asked with a laugh. "Don't you want me along?"

"Sure," Lonnie said. He wet his lips. "It's out of your way, that's all, 136th Street and Lenox."

"Stop trying to get rid of me," Irv said amiably. "You're a queer guy, and you get queer ideas in your bean. Sometimes I don't understand you at all."

"Reckon that's cause you're white and I'm colored."

"Aw, nuts." Irv flipped his cigarette out into the street. "It's cause no horn player has got any brains. What I have

## THE FRIENDS

to put up with from you! Even Dixieland, cripes! You don't deserve I should wear my feet out running around with you."

At six-thirty the two of them stood before the crumbling old tenement house on 136th Street. Junk was strewn in the areaway around the steps, and the windows on the first two floors were patched with newspapers. There was not a curtain or a sign of human life about the house.

"D'ya mean people live here?" Irv asked incredulously. "In this dive?"

Lonnie gazed at the house bitterly. "Yeah." He hesitated and then said firmly, "You wait here, Irv."

Left alone, Irv kicked idly at a tin can and a piece of garbage lying on the sidewalk. Colored children were playing on the steps of houses farther down the block, and across the street a woman gazed down curiously from her top-floor window. Irv looked up again at the tenement into which Lonnie had disappeared, and he shook his head. At last Lonnie came out and walked slowly down the steps.

"Did you get the room?" Irv asked.

"Yeah," Lonnie said. "I got it. It's a little room. It ain't even got a full size double bed. There's only one bathroom in the whole house and one kitchenette."

"What did you pay for it?" Irv asked.

"Six dollars a week. I gave the guy a week's rent in advance. I got the receipt."

"Six dollars!" Irv exclaimed. "Gosh, Lonnie, that's more than twenty-four bucks a month. We don't pay much more than that in Brownsville, and we got four rooms. Lonnie, boy, you got yourself gypped."

"I couldn't get nothin' else," Lonnie said angrily. "I know I was gypped. You think I'm so dumb I don't know? Colored folks always get gypped, all the time, always get pushed around. And the place

stinks, too. It's an old stinkin' beat-up rat hole."

They walked on in silence, their footsteps sounding loud on the pavement. After they had gone several blocks, Irv asked softly, "Ain't we gonna stop and have supper?"

Lonnie said nothing.

Two minutes later Irv slowed down in front of a luncheonette. Still softly, he said, "Maybe you can blow that horn on an empty stomach, but I gotta fill up my insides. I can't beat no piano keys with my stomach thumpin' away too. I'm gonna eat."

All at once Lonnie's face broke into a smile. "Listen, skinny guy, you call what you do eatin'? Them little lox sandwiches on hollah? There's a place 'round here where they serve pickled hoss feet just to start you off with. Then you get half a jabbersocket, with some a that frim fram sauce."

"This the place?" Irv asked.

Lonnie peered through the steamy plate glass window of the luncheonette. "Sure looks like it," he said solemnly.

"You wanna go in?"

"Sure do."

Irv sighed deeply. "You had me worried for a coupla minutes. Ain't natural for a horn player not to be hungry."

The next day Lonnie obtained permission to leave work at three o'clock in order to meet the Washington train. He would, of course, be docked three hours for the time lost, but he couldn't let the folks come in and have nobody meet them.

The train was late, and he waited in Penn Station behind the ropes for half an hour. Finally the train came in. Lonnie looked nervously through the crowds; for a while he thought they hadn't come after all. Then he saw them. His mother

## COMMON GROUND

was holding on to his father's arm, and both of them looked lost and bewildered.

Lonnie ran up to them. "Momma! Poppa!"

His mother flung her arms around his neck and kissed him on both cheeks. Lonnie could feel her tears wet against his face. His father shook hands with him awkwardly.

"You got a room for us to stay, Lonnie?" his father asked in a worried voice. "I told Mary she should've wrote to you sooner that we was comin' today, but fust we was comin' on the bus, and then Mary bought us the train tickets. . . ."

"It's okay, Poppa, I got a room," Lonnie said.

"You look fine, son, you look fine," Mrs. Jackson kept repeating in her soft, slurred voice.

Lonnie reached down and picked up the two worn cardboard suitcases that his father had dropped on the floor. "Come on, let's go," he said gently. "You must be dead beat, Momma."

As they walked through the station to the subway, Lonnie studied his parents covertly. His mother was dressed in her best clothes, a black cloth coat and a brown hat that she had pulled down over her crinkly gray hair. His father's suit was frayed and shabby; Lonnie remembered it from before he went into the Army.

Suddenly he asked, "What did you do with the furniture, Momma?"

"There wasn't much of it wuth anything," Mrs. Jackson said. "We done got rid of it. We ain't got nothin' now but what's in them two suitcases."

The suitcases felt very light to Lonnie. Nothing in them but a few rags of clothing. He wondered, with a flare of misery, where his father could look for work. At the docks, stevedoring, maybe. His mother would be able to get domestic jobs

by the day as soon as she learned her way around.

At 135th Street, Lonnie steered his parents out of the subway and along Lenox Avenue to the next block. They stopped in front of the tenement.

"It ain't a very nice room," Lonnie said. "It costs a lotta money too. I couldn't do nothin' better, though. I wanted to give you my room, but I share it with another guy who works nights, and he don't want to move out."

"I'm sure you did the best you could," Mrs. Jackson said quietly.

They went inside. Lonnie said, "It's on the second floor. Be careful of the steps, Momma. Some of 'em are rotted away."

The hall was dark and narrow, with plaster peeling from the walls. There was a dank, moldy smell in the house, an indefinable odor of age and decay. On the second floor, Lonnie took a key out of his pocket and opened one of the doors. He stepped into the room with the suitcases, and his mother and father followed.

The room had a three-quarter size bed, one chair, a rickety table and a bureau. The bed took up nearly the whole room, and the other pieces of furniture were pushed against the wall so that a narrow aisle was left. There was one window, with a broken pane of glass, and a single electric bulb dangling from the ceiling. The walls were bare of paint and paper, and in some places the holes were so deep that the naked boards showed through.

Mrs. Jackson sat on the bed and folded her hands in her lap. She looked around the room, and then her eyes rested on Lonnie's father. The two of them exchanged a glance.

"The toilet and bath's on this floor," Lonnie said. "Down the hall there's a two-burner stove where you can cook.



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There ain't no icebox, though, so you can only buy food enough for one meal." He glanced at the holes in the walls and ceiling. "I don't s'pose you could leave food in the room neither."

"Rats?" Mrs. Jackson asked.

"All these places got mice and rats." Lonnie crossed to the window and looked out, unable to face them. "Why don't you say somethin'?" he asked. "It ain't fit for a dog to live in, is it?"

"We can't go back now," Mr. Jackson said. "Even if we don't much like the room. There ain't nuthin to go back to."

"Tell us what you been doin', son," Mrs. Jackson said.

"Me?" He half turned round. "I work for a store downtown, shipping clerk. That's daytime. At night I play music with some guys. We got a little clubroom back of a candy store near here, and maybe soon we can get us a real job playin'. We got a nice little combo, piano, alto sax, bass, drums, and trumpet. Trumpet is me."

"Where you learn to play that?"

"Fella in the Army taught me, Momma. I bought my own trumpet second-hand." Lonnie suddenly smiled. "I can play real sweet the way you like it, but most of the time we play be-bop. The fellas like bop, especially Irv. There's no difference 'tween Irv and Dizzy Gillespie 'cept Irv is white instead colored and can't grow no little beard and plays piano instead trumpet."

"He's a white boy?" Mr. Jackson asked.

"Yeah, Irv Weiss. We got a mixed band, Poppa, three colored boys and two white. Irv's a Jewish boy."

Lonnie felt the curiosity behind his mother's and father's gaze. He opened his mouth to say more, but at that moment he heard a familiar voice somewhere below in the hall. Lonnie went to the door and peered out. It was Irv

all right, downstairs, talking to someone, asking which room belonged to the Jacksons.

Lonnie did not call out but stood there and waited, a frown on his face. Finally Irv's head appeared on the stairs. He caught sight of Lonnie and grinned.

"Why did you come here?" Lonnie demanded.

"To see you, you lug. The guys want to know if you're coming around tonight."

"I dunno," Lonnie said. "My folks just got here."

Irv squeezed into the room. There was hardly any place for him to stand, skinny as he was.

"This is my mother 'n father," Lonnie mumbled. "I was tellin' you about Irv, Ma. This is Irv."

Mrs. Jackson beamed at him. "You set right down, Mr. Irv," she said. "Right on the bed, there ain't no other place. My son was tellin' us 'bout how you play piano with him."

"I hope he told how good I was," Irv said. He smiled brightly at both Mr. and Mrs. Jackson. Mr. Jackson had pressed himself against the wall to give the visitor more room, and Lonnie stood next to the window, one knee on the rickety chair. He had jammed his hands into his pockets and was not looking at anybody.

"Did you have a good trip?" Irv asked Mrs. Jackson.

She nodded. "The ride from Washington was real fast. We was there in Washington two weeks, you know, visitin' with our gal, Mary. That's Lonnie's oldest sister. She's got three beautiful children now. Lonnie, you didn't see that picture we got of Mary's children. Edna Lou, that's the biggest one, she's graduatin' from public school next month."

Mrs. Jackson swooped down, picked up one of the suitcases and put it on the bed beside Irv. She snapped open the

lock and began rummaging through the contents until finally, with a little cry of triumph, she brought forth a large-sized photograph. She showed it to Irv first. It was a family picture of a handsome colored woman in her thirties, a tall man beside her and three children standing stiffly in front.

"That's Mary and her husband, Edwin. He's a Pullman porter," Mrs. Jackson said. "We got another daughter, Nelvia. She lives in Mobile and she's got two children. That's five grandchildren, ain't it, Poppa? Lonnie, you want to see this picture?"

Mrs. Jackson shoved the picture into Lonnie's hand. He looked at it for a moment and then put it back in the suitcase.

"Those are nice-looking kids," Irv said heartily.

Mrs. Jackson took a little packet from the suitcase and gave that to Lonnie, too.

"Lonnie," she said, "when Poppa 'n I were in Washington, we went down to the Board of Health and had them blood tests made. Mary said we had to have 'em to git married in New York. Now we in New York, we want to git us married legal right away. We have the papers for the blood tests right here."

"Aw, Momma," Lonnie said in a pained voice.

"What's the matter, son?" Mr. Jackson asked. "Ain't it to your likin', your momma and I gittin' married?"

Lonnie looked at Irv and then he looked away. "Sure, you can get married any time you want to," he said tightly. "You can get married tomorrow. I work a five-day week and I got tomorrow off. I'll go down with you in the mornin' to City Hall."

"Y'all want to get married tomorrow?" Mr. Jackson asked his wife.

She nodded briskly. "That would be real nice."

Mr. Jackson turned to Lonnie. "Mary said we got to git us two witnesses at the court house. You got anybody else to bring, Lonnie?"

"Maybe Mr. Irv would come," Mrs. Jackson said, smiling at him.

"No, he wouldn't!" Lonnie cried out. The others stared at him, startled by the fury in his voice. "Irv don't have to horn in on this, see! We don't need him. We can find plenty a witnesses easy down at City Hall."

There was a strained, uncomfortable silence in the room. At last Irv stood up.

"I guess I'll be going," he said. "What shall I tell the guys, Lonnie?"

"You can tell 'em whatever you want," Lonnie muttered. "I ain't coming around tonight."

Irv flushed and awkwardly changed the position of his feet. "Well, good-bye, Mr. and Mrs. Jackson," he said. "I'm glad to have met you."

"Good-bye," they echoed in unison.

After Irv left, Mrs. Jackson shook her head reprovingly at Lonnie. "You shouldn't have spoke that way. You as much as threw him out. That white boy is nice. What you got against him?"

Lonnie sank down on the bed. "Nuthin'!" he said in a harsh voice. "What you botherin' me about him for? You're going to get married tomorrow, ain't you? That's what you 'n Poppa want, and it's okay."

At nine the next morning, Lonnie climbed the steps to his parents' room and rapped on the door. Mrs. Jackson flung it open as though she had been standing there with her hand on the knob.

"Mawnin', Lonnie," she said cheerfully.

Lonnie made an attempt to smile. "It's a fine day for a wedding," he said. "You had somethin' to eat?"

"We was waitin' on you," Mrs. Jackson replied. "We been waitin' more'n hour."

"Don't pay her no mind, son," Mr. Jackson put in. "She just so impatient to get married."

Lonnie noticed that his father and mother had pressed their clothes, and his father was wearing a blue and white flowered tie with a dime store stickpin in it. They both had a look of happy expectancy.

"Well, let's get goin'," Lonnie said impatiently. "We can stop for coffee near the subway."

He hurried them out ahead of him down the dark and malodorous staircase. Outside the house, the air was truly springlike and warm. Lonnie marched along fast, muttering every once in a while to himself. His mother and father whispered behind his back, subdued by their son's black mood.

They rode downtown in the subway, and at the City Hall station, Lonnie led them out. Silently they walked across the little park flanked by the tall gray public buildings.

"Which is the courthouse?" Mrs. Jackson asked, suddenly timid.

"It's the City Hall, Momma," Mr. Jackson told her. "That's what Lonnie said, didn't you, Lonnie?"

"Yeah." Lonnie was gazing past them, straining to make out the figure near the entrance of the building which they approached.

"Lonnie, ain't that your friend standin' there?" Mrs. Jackson asked. "Ain't that the boy who was up to our room?"

"Yes," Lonnie said. "It's Irv."

He stopped for a moment and drew a deep breath. A look of intense relief spread over his face, and his eyes brightened. Even his lips twitched with relief.

Irv ground out his cigarette under his heel and straightened up.

"Hi ya, Irv," Lonnie said.

Irv gave him a severe look. "You didn't deserve I should come."

"Yeah, I know," Lonnie answered.

"And I wouldn't have come, except for your mother and father. You got such a natural way of messing things up, they'd never get married today."

Irv smiled at Mr. and Mrs. Jackson. "Lonnie's my pal," he said, "but he's only a horn player and he's been blowing his brains right out through that trumpet."

Mrs. Jackson looked puzzled.

"It's all right, Ma," Lonnie said. "Let's go in."

Irv found the proper line to stand in for the license, and Irv argued successfully with the clerk about the Washington blood test. Irv stood over Mrs. Jackson's shoulder while she painfully wrote her name, and Irv took charge of everything.

After the license was obtained, they waited a long time in an anteroom lined with benches. The couple immediately ahead had a large, noisy entourage. Mr. and Mrs. Jackson and Lonnie and Irv sat together on a bench and watched them, smiling sometimes.

Finally they were called behind the screen which served to give an illusion of privacy to the ceremony. A city official, behind a pulpit-like stand, directed them in a bored voice to their proper places. Mr. and Mrs. Jackson stood in front of the dais, with Lonnie and Irv off to one side. From above, the magistrate began to intone the words of the marriage ceremony.

"You may kiss the bride," the man said abruptly.

Mr. Jackson kissed his wife heartily, and Lonnie kissed her too. Irv shook hands all around. Then they went out, through the halls, down the steps of the building, and started to walk slowly across

the small park. Mrs. Jackson dabbed at her eyes with her handkerchief.

"I'd like to set down here on one of these benches," she said. "Is it all right to do that?"

"Sure, why not?" Lonnie asked sharply.

Mr. and Mrs. Jackson sat down, while Lonnie and Irv perched on the low railing beside them. They all lifted their faces to the bright morning sun.

"That's mighty sweet air," Mr. Jackson said. "Y'all want to know somethin'? Hit's the fust time I ever walked into a courthouse without my heart jumpin' outa my skin. In Larimer County we kep' as far away as we could from the law. Court's are white man's courts, and the laws are white man's laws. Ain't never meant nothin' to us but trouble. You walk down the street of the town where the white folks are, and you gits into trouble. You want to go in and git married, but you got to go to the courthouse for that and ask questions where to go and what to do, and then you finds yo'self in real trouble. So you don't do it. You keep a-plenty far away from trouble."

Irv suddenly sucked in his breath.

"You say somethin', fella?" Lonnie asked.

"Hell, no, I didn't say nothing."

"Lonnie, you git along with your friend," Mr. Jackson said. "Momma an' me, we'll stay here awhile. We kin go on back when we wants to. Station number is 135th Street, ain't that right?"

Lonnie looked at them doubtfully. Then he said, "Okay."

The boys stood up and began to saunter toward the subway. There was a

closed newsstand at the subway entrance, and they stopped there and looked at each other.

"I told the boys we'd be over at the club early tonight," Irv said. "Seeing it's Saturday, they don't want to be tootin' out their misery all night."

"Seems like I ain't played in a year," Lonnie said.

Irv beat out a little tattoo on top of the stand. "We got some time now. Whaddya say we go down to the Commodore and dig some of the new records?"

Lonnie grinned. "Man, don't you go pollutin' the store for two hours with be-bop. They'll sure throw us outa that place one of these days, right along with your ole bop."

"I'm gonna buy some records today," Irv said. "I'm gonna buy 'Bird's Nest' and take it home and make you listen about a hundred times to Charlie Parker blowing that sax."

"Charlie ain't bad," Lonnie said.

"Ain't bad? Why, he's, he's—" Irv began to sputter, but then he finished gently, "he's gone, real gone, that's all." Swiftly Irv clapped Lonnie on the back. "C'mon, you lug, let's race."

They dashed down the subway steps, laughing and scuffling and jostling each other. At the bottom they straightened themselves up with sudden decorum, put their coins in the turnstile and walked out together onto the subway platform.

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*Jean Paradise is at work on a novel with an interracial theme. Her story, "The Egg Man," appeared in the Summer 1948 CG.*

## • Miscellany •

Frank Mlakar, assistant editor of CG in its early days and contributor of several short stories to its pages, was recently awarded one of the Eugene F. Saxton Memorial Trust writing fellowships to complete a novel about a Slovenian peasant and who, after making his adjustments in this country, returns to the old country and its old order. "When great segments of Europe went communistic," he says, "including Yugoslavia, the place where my parents had come from, the novel focused itself for me, and I decided that its point would be why it is that many persons cannot bear the idea of being free, and will do almost anything to avoid the terrible responsibility of freedom."

Mary Harris Seifert, another CG writer, was also given one of the fellowships a few months ago for a projected novel. The fellowships were established

in 1943 in memory of Harper's chief literary editor for many years, and offer substantial outright grants of money to creative writers to enable them to undertake or complete books definitely projected.

Henry C. Tracy, who has been sole conductor of the Bookshelf in this magazine since 1941, feels he can no longer carry the entire burden of the mass of books now being published in the COMMON GROUND field. Fortunately we will not lose his services entirely, for he will stay on as reviewer of one section of the Bookshelf, each of the others being handled by a different reviewer. Mr. Tracy has made his department a valuable part of COMMON GROUND across the years, many libraries building their acquisitions in the racial-cultural field around his CG notices.

## • The Pursuit of Liberty •

CONDUCTED BY MILTON R. KONVITZ

### THE DP LAW AND DISCRIMINATION IN IMMIGRATION

CONGRESS has enacted, and the President has signed, a DP bill which has been characterized by the New York Times as "the shameful DP bill." In his message of June 25 accompanying the bill with his signature President Truman told Congress that he signed S-2242 with very great reluctance. He pointed out that the bill is flagrantly discriminatory; that it "mocks the American tradition of fair play"; that it "is a close question whether the bill is better or worse than no bill at all."

Eighteen months before the bill was enacted President Truman had called

upon Congress to enact a displaced persons law, saying that he did not feel that the United States had done its part in the admission of displaced persons. Six months later President Truman sent a special message to Congress on the subject, in which he said: "We are dealing with a human problem, a world tragedy. I urge the Congress to press forward with its consideration of this subject and to pass suitable legislation as speedily as possible." A third time, last January, President Truman urged Congress to pass legislation "so that this nation may do its

share in caring for homeless and suffering refugees of all faiths."

Although Congress had ample opportunity to pass suitable legislation for the admission of displaced persons, it waited until the last days of the session in June to take up a measure without affording a single public hearing.

The DP law provides for the admission of 200,000 displaced persons in the next two years, an additional 2,000 recent Czech refugees, and 3,000 orphans, a total of 205,000 persons.

In his statement of June 25 President Truman said that the bad points of the bill are numerous and that together "they form a pattern of discrimination and intolerance wholly inconsistent with the American sense of justice. The bill discriminates in callous fashion against displaced persons of the Jewish faith." The chief device used to discriminate against Jewish displaced persons is the provision that restricts eligibility to those DP's who entered Germany, Austria, or Italy on or before December 22, 1945. Most of the Jewish DP's who had entered these countries by that time are no longer in those countries, and most of the Jewish DP's now in those countries arrived there after December 22, 1945, and so do not come within the category of qualified persons under the law. The President pointed out that by this device more than 90 per cent of the remaining Jewish DP's are excluded.

And even the remaining 10 per cent eligible persons are required to face onerous restrictions. "For all practical purposes," said President Truman, "it must be frankly recognized, therefore, that this bill excludes Jewish displaced persons, rather than accepting a fair proportion of them along with other faiths."

The law also excludes many DP's of the Catholic faith, who had fled into the American zones after December 22, 1945.

President Truman called attention to

other objectionable features of the law:

(1) The bill charges the DP's admitted under its provisions to future immigration quotas of their countries of birth up to 50 per cent of the quota per year. This means that the figure of 200,000 is really illusory. The DP's should be admitted as non-quota immigrants. (2) The law requires that at least 40 per cent of the persons allowed to enter this country must come from areas which have been annexed by a foreign power. This guarantees a disproportionately high percentage of persons from the Czechoslovakian and Balkan areas. (3) The law contains many restrictive requirements, such as prior assurances of suitable employment, and prior assurances of "safe and sanitary housing." It also calls for very complicated investigations of each applicant, and burdensome reports from the immigrants after they get here.

The DP Act fails to grant permanent residence status to some 15,000 DP's who are already lawfully in this country. The law as enacted requires a concurrent resolution of Congress in favor of each individual after his application has been approved by the Attorney General.

"I know," said President Truman, "what a bitter disappointment this bill is—to the many displaced victims of persecution who looked to the United States for hope; to the millions of our citizens who wanted to help them in the finest American spirit; to the many members of the Congress who fought hard but unsuccessfully for a decent displaced persons bill. I hope that this bitter disappointment will not turn to despair."

Passage of the Displaced Persons Act is, as the New York Times has said editorially, "a shameful victory" for the school of bigotry.

In the comments on the law no notice has been taken of the fact that in essentials the DP law is consistent with the



## THE PURSUIT OF LIBERTY

general immigration law found on the statute books of the United States. The quota law of 1924 requires the selection of immigrants on the basis of "national origin." The national origins quota law was adopted for the purpose, in part, to prefer "old" as against "new" immigration. The quota scheme, as set up by the law of Congress, adversely affects Jews, Greeks, Italians, Poles, and Russians. It discriminates against Southern and Eastern Europeans on a group basis. It tries to insure that our immigration shall conform "racially" to our "old" immigration rather than to our "new" immigration. When the act was pending, Charles Evans Hughes, then Secretary of State, called to the attention of the Immigration Committee of the House of Representatives the fact "that use of the 1890 census, instead of the 1910 census, as a basis for the fixing of national origins quotas, would be likely to offend Italy, Rumania, and other countries, which considered the legislation an unjust discrimination." The majority of the House committee, however, rejected the protests, saying that the "racial" status quo in the United States had to be preserved, and that the arrival of aliens from Southern and Eastern Europe in great numbers would mean charging the United States with the socially inadequate. A minority of committee members noted, however, that the legislation was largely discriminatory.

The school of bigotry has been consistently successful in the framing of the immigration policy of the United States. The Dyer Act is not the first, but only the most recent, of the shameful victories won by this school.

Note should be taken also of the fact that the Eightieth Congress failed to pass the Judd bill. This bill was considered by a House Sub-committee on Immigration and Naturalization, but Congress adjourned before this Sub-committee

found it possible to make a report to the House Judiciary Committee. The Department of State submitted to the House Sub-committee an analysis and summary of the bill, and stated: "The real objective of the bill—stated in a few words—is to eliminate all racial barriers in existing naturalization laws and to make it possible for Asian and Pacific peoples to enter the United States as quota immigrants; and, yet, from a practical standpoint, to keep within a reasonable number those persons who may come to the United States."

"The bill retains all the essentials of the Immigration Act of 1924, as amended, and maintains the full intent of the national origins provisions of that act. It extends to the peoples of the other Asian and Pacific countries the opportunity to emigrate to the United States, as has been done by special legislation for the Chinese and to the peoples of India. The total number of such oriental peoples who would be admitted thereunder, however, would equal less than 1 per cent of the sum of all the present quotas."

The Judd bill should have been enacted, but it is not true to say that the real objective of the bill is to eliminate all racial barriers in existing naturalization laws. As long as the 1924 Immigration Act, with its national origins provisions, stands on the statute books, American immigration law will continue to be based on "racial" distinctions—a foundation correctly characterized by President Truman as an "abhorrent ground of intoleration."

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A decision was handed down on June 7 by the Supreme Court in the *Takahashi* commercial fishing case discussed in the Summer 1948 issue of *CC*. The Court declared the California statute invalid.

## • Round-Up •

CONDUCTED BY CAREY MC WILLIAMS

THE socio-economic aspects of the crisis which has developed in Navajoland are expertly stated and analyzed in a recent publication of the United States Indian Service: "The People: A Study of the Navajos" by Dr. George I. Sanchez of the University of Texas. There were only about 8,000 Navajos when the tribe was first settled on the reservation in 1867; today the tribal population is in excess of 60,000. Although the reservation has been enlarged from 3,500,000 to 16,750,000 acres—an area larger than Massachusetts, Vermont, Connecticut, and Rhode Island, which allows two and one-half square miles per family or three hundred acres per person—the nature of the terrain is such that the inhabitants actually suffer from overcrowding! Overgrazing of the range in terms of its limited resources has sharpened the problem of subsistence for a people primarily dependent upon a pastoral economy. It takes 30 acres of land on the reservation to support one sheep, 150 acres for a horse, 120 acres for a cow, and the amount of irrigable land is negligible. In consequence of these factors, Dr. Sanchez estimates that the reservation cannot support more than 35,000 of its present residents. Of the 22,000 children of school age on the reservation today, fewer than 6,000 are enrolled in schools. The death rate for tuberculosis is 380 per 100,000 among the Navajos by comparison with 40 per 100,000 for the nation. It is estimated that approximately 2,000 cases of active tuberculosis are to be found on the reservation today, with an utter insufficiency of hospital beds and medical facilities. Visitors who have been on the reservation within the last few

weeks have told me of visiting Navajo families, living within a few miles of Gallup, who have had nothing to eat for periods of three and four days at a stretch. One such visitor, an editor of the London New Statesman, told me he had visited a hogan in which a 9-year-old boy was living with two grandparents, both blind. The boy was looking after 70 head of sheep—the sole means of support for the family—and, with a rifle in his hand, went about the reservation in his spare moments demanding that he be admitted to some school and threatening dire consequences if his demand were refused. For an understanding of the factors underlying the economic crisis which has engulfed this brave people, this 90-page document by Dr. Sanchez is indispensable. It is fully documented, contains some excellent illustrations, and provides a good over-all description of the current plight of the Navajos. Copies can be obtained from the United States Indian Service, Washington, D.C.

The Navajo crisis has, of course, its psychological and cultural aspects. The Navajos are the largest Indian tribe in the United States today, with a rate of population increase of about 2 per cent each year. According to John Collier, the Athapascan language spoken by the tribe is the only effective language for 95 per cent of the Navajos. For these and other reasons, experts have long recognized that the Navajos present the thorniest problem of acculturation of all the Indian tribes. On December 31, 1947, Secretary Krug received the Final Report on the Indian Personality and Administration, a 60,000-word document representing the results of investigations conducted by

"teams" of anthropologists, educators, psychiatrists, and administrators that John Collier had assigned to the problem while he was still Commissioner of Indian Affairs. Indicative of the character of the report and of the investigations upon which it is based, is the fact that such volumes as *The Hopi Way* by Laura Thompson and Alice Joseph, *Warriors Without Weapons* by Gordon Macgregor, *The Navajo* by Clyde Kluckhohn and Dorothea Leighton, and *Children of the People* by the same authors, all stem from this research. The psychological and cultural aspects of the current crisis are briefly but pertinently discussed in the April 1948 issue of the News Letter issued by the Institute of Ethnic Affairs, where the highlights of the report to Secretary Krug are also summarized (810 18th St., N.W., Washington 6, D.C.).

The University of Texas has just issued an interesting pamphlet by Ruth Ann Fogartie entitled: "Texas-Born Spanish-Name Students in Texas Colleges and Universities." Miss Fogartie has gathered material to establish the number of Spanish-name students enrolled in the 33 colleges and universities in Texas which hold "senior standing," that is, those that are four-year institutions. For the school year 1945-1946, these colleges had a total enrollment of 49,091; but, of this number, only 799, or 1.627 per cent, were Spanish-name students. On the other hand, Spanish-name children constitute 20.4 per cent of the total white scholastic population in Texas and, proportionately, their college enrollment should be 9,818 rather than 799—more than twelve times greater than the present enrollment. Despite this poor showing, is the number of Spanish-name students increasing? To answer this question, Miss Fogartie was able to secure figures from only one institution, the University of Texas, but these show that

over a 25-year period the number of Spanish-name students has only increased from 0.64 per cent of total enrollment to 1.25 per cent. Thus, while the number of Spanish-name students is increasing, it is increasing very slowly and the rate of increase bears no relation to the immediate need. For, as Dr. Sanchez has pointed out, "The Spanish-speaking people must increasingly and to the fullest extent of their ability, assume responsibility for their own development. . . . More Spanish-speaking doctors, lawyers, social workers, teachers, and members of other professions would aid in the promotion of individual and group welfare."

The pamphlet also throws some light on the question of why the enrollment of Spanish-name students is still so low. To the question, "Do you offer any courses which are centered around the education of Spanish-speaking people?" 72.73 per cent of the institutions returned negative replies. Asked if they offered any courses especially designed for Spanish-speaking students, 82.82 per cent said they did not. At the same time, Miss Fogartie found that Spanish-name students at the University of Texas definitely needed special aid in English, as shown by the grades which they had received. Again, 77.28 per cent of the institutions replied that they provided no type of counseling program for Spanish-name students. Only 40.49 per cent of the colleges and universities in Texas offer scholarships for which Texas-born, Spanish-name students would be eligible. Asked if they had made any studies of the problems of their Spanish-speaking students, 87.37 per cent answered "no."

On June 15, 1948, Judge Ben H. Rice, Jr., of the federal district court, western division of Texas, in the case of *Delgado vs. Bastrop School District*, handed down a decision in which he en-

joined the school authorities from "in any manner, directly or indirectly, participating in the custom, usage, or practice of segregating pupils of Mexican or other Latin-American descent in separate schools or classes." This decision is, of course, in line with the well-known Westminster School Case in California (161 Federal Reporter, 2nd Series, p. 774). In the Texas case, however, L. A. Woods, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, was named as a party (the state superintendent was not a party in the California case). As a consequence, Mr. Woods immediately issued instructions and regulations which have been sent to all school officers of county, city, town, and rural school districts in Texas, ordering them to comply with the ruling of Judge Rice. The idea of including the state superintendent of public instruction as a party in such suits represents an advance in technique, for it enables the group discriminated against to secure immediate compliance on a state-wide basis. In California, on the other hand, a recent study has shown that twenty-five or more districts in one of the larger Southern California counties still continue to segregate Mexican Americans despite the decision in the Westminster case (see the article by Dr. W. Henry Cooke in *School and Society*, June 5, 1948). Thus, in California, still further suits will probably have to be filed before state-wide compliance with the Westminster decision can be obtained.

The American Committee for Protection of Foreign Born has just issued an excellent little pamphlet by Isabel Gonzalez, "Step-Children of a Nation: The Status of Mexican-Americans." A tireless and most effective worker among Spanish-speaking people in the Southwest, Miss Gonzalez is executive secretary of the Committee to Organize the Mexican People. In this pamphlet Miss

Gonzalez makes one extremely pertinent suggestion, namely, that the Immigration Service should take official cognizance of the fact that many Mexicans are in the United States illegally through no fault of their own. Perhaps the simplest way to cope with this issue would be to shift the burden of proof so that the Immigration Service would be required in naturalization cases to prove that a Mexican applicant was here illegally, rather than to compel the applicant to prove the legality of his entry. There is no doubt but that the difficulty of proving legal entry is the most important single deterrent to citizenship so far as Mexican immigrants are concerned. Anyone who has attempted to assist a Mexican immigrant in the preliminaries to citizenship is well aware of the difficulties involved in proving legal entry. Even in cases where the proof is available, this is a costly and bothersome process; and, in many cases, the proof is simply non-existent. It is not by accident that the bulk of naturalized citizens among the Spanish-speaking should be those who entered after 1924, when some semblance of orderly admission prevailed along the border. The illegal entrants, and they are a large group, simply could not have complied with the immigration regulations prior to 1924, for there was virtually no means by which such compliance could have been registered or approved. As a matter of fact, the whole question of immigration from Mexico needs to be reconsidered in the light of persistent social realities rather than prevailing legal fictions. Mexicans are constantly being rounded up for deportation under circumstances that indicate that their presence in this country, while technically illegal, has been a by-product of the system under which they were recruited for employment. I have before me now a clipping from the Portland Oregonian of

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July 3, 1948, telling of 80 Mexicans who have been lodged in the county jail awaiting deportation. It is a safe guess that these men are *braceros*, recruited for agricultural employment, who either stayed on after their contracts had expired or, more likely, who drifted into non-agricultural employment and thereby changed their status as residents. It is utterly inconsistent for the federal government to encourage the recruitment of Mexican nationals for agricultural employment and then to subject these same nationals to arrest and deportation for non-compliance with a set of regulations which actually invite a breach on the part of the nationals. For example, it is common knowledge that any Mexican national who is a "good" worker, who sticks to agricultural employment, and who pleases his employer, will not be molested by the Immigration Service however illegal his entry or continued residence may be. In effect, therefore, the Immigration Service functions, today as yesterday, as a police agency for private employers. (Copies of this pamphlet may be obtained from the American Committee for Protection of Foreign Born, 23 West 26 Street, New York 10. 10¢ a copy.)

The Southwest Area Office of the Unitarian Service Committee now issues a monthly summary of events pertaining to Anglo-Latin Relations in the Southwest (Border Trends, Box 912, McAllen, Texas, \$1 per year). The current issue summarizes a report prepared by a committee of the League of United Latin American Citizens on conditions in a labor camp for Mexican Americans in Mathis, Texas, and describes school facilities for Mexican youngsters in the same community. In one labor camp no washing facilities had been provided for 120 occupants. Among 130 residents of three camps in the area, the committee found 35 cases of illness without adequate med-

ical or public health facilities. Although school funds are allocated on the basis of the school census, 800 Latin American children were found crowded into a dilapidated Mexican ward school, while a modern school had been provided in the same area for 250 Anglo American students.

The Commission on Law and Social Action of the American Jewish Congress has just issued a pamphlet by Theodore Leskes on "Multiple Applications for Admission to American Medical Schools" (copies can be obtained from the Commission offices, 1834 Broadway, New York 23). Defenders of the quota system which prevails in so many schools of medicine have long maintained that this system was a necessary safeguard against having to accept "a disproportionate number" of Jewish, Negro, and Italian American students. Quite apart from the question of whether this argument, if true, would justify the quota system, Mr. Leskes has investigated the statistics upon which it is based. The 69 accredited medical schools in the United States each year receive almost 35,000 applications for admission, although there is room only for 6,500 students in the first year classes. This gross figure of 35,000 applications, however, contains many cases of "multiple applications," that is, cases in which a student has applied to two or more schools. Mr. Leskes' conclusions, based on a sample of New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut doctors, are as follows:

1. "It is strikingly clear that applicants from minority racial or religious groups file more applications per applicant than white Protestants. In the five year period, 1935-1939, Jews filed almost 5.5 times as many applications as either white Protestants or non-Italian Catholics. The trend is also strikingly upwards. While the number of applications filed per applicant by white Protestants increased



from 1.13 in the period before 1920 to 2.25 in 1935-1939, and the non-Italian Catholic ratio from 1.25 to 2.50 in the same period, the Jewish increase during those years was from 1.27 to 12.51.

2. "The average application from a white Protestant or a non-Italian Catholic has considerably greater chance of acceptance than an application from a Jew. In the years 1935-1939, one-third of the Protestant applications (18 out of 54) and 40% of the non-Italian Catholic applications were rejected (8 out of 20) but over 90% of the Jewish applications (468 out of 513) were rejected. Here too the trend is definitely downward, with the chance of a Jewish application being accepted shrinking each five year period.

3. "It may fairly be assumed that the wide differences between the experience of Jewish and Italian-Americans on the one hand and white Protestants and non-Italian Catholics on the other in applying for admission to American medical schools is the result of a widespread, deep-rooted policy of discrimination in effect since 1920 and growing steadily worse."

The American Journal of Orthopsychiatry: A Journal of Human Behavior, for January 1948, contains an interesting article by Dr. Nathan W. Ackerman and Marie Jahoda on anti-Semitic attitudes. The article is based on material collected from thirty accredited psychoanalysts having to do with persons undergoing or having already undergone psychoanalytic therapy. The authors point out that there are two distinct but interacting levels of correlation between anti-Semitic behavior and personality. First of all, there is the anti-Semite whose hostility to Jews seems to be mainly the product or by-product of conformity to the attitude of the dominant group. The other extreme is related to the anti-Semite whose motivation derives from some basic distortion in his personality to

which his anti-Semitism has a specific relation. All the patients suffered from diffuse anxiety; not one was secure in his group membership. "In this syndrome of weakness, anxiety, and instability," to quote from the article, "anti-Semitism seems to play a functionally well-defined role. It is a defense against self-hate; it represents displacement of the self-destroying trends. . . ." Many of the cases involved social outcasts who denied their emotional and social isolation. Unable to achieve real acceptance by other persons, they sought acceptance by the dominant group. Anti-Semitism was, so to speak, the password by which they hoped to win this acceptance. Through pseudo-identifications with prestige and power groups these individuals sought to overcome their own feelings of unworthiness.

This is a particularly important study, it seems to me, for it demonstrates that about all psychological studies have to contribute to an understanding of anti-Semitism, as distinguished from an understanding of anti-Semites, is a description and delineation of the psychological processes and mechanisms which are involved. Accepting the conclusions of this study at face value, just what do they reveal about the two general levels of correlation between anti-Semitic behavior and personality structures? First, that disparity in the possession of social power creates a predisposition on the part of the weak and the rejected to identify themselves with dominant groups; and, second, that the insecurities of modern life, which are largely of social origin, make for a "diffuse anxiety" which, through a number of well-known processes, tends to find expression in anti-Semitic behavior. In either case, however, social factors are the real determinants or perhaps one should say the "prime" determinants.



## • The Bookshelf •

CONDUCTED BY HENRY C. TRACY

### POLITICS AND DESTINY

*THE POLITICS OF EQUALITY.* By Leslie Lipson. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 520 pp. \$6

*THE AMERICAN DEMOCRACY.* By Harold J. Laski. New York: Viking Press. 785 pp. \$6.50

*THE BALANCE OF POWER.* By Henry Lee Moon. New York: Doubleday. 256 pp. \$3

A complete exhibit of the politics of equality is furnished by New Zealand. That Dominion won in 1890, when the Liberal Party triumphed, a world reputation for boldness in political experiment. Tested now for over half a century, the system works. Leslie Lipson, who for eight years taught political science in the University of New Zealand and was Director of the School of Public Administration (he is now at Swarthmore College), is qualified to give an account of that system. It was from the first an experiment in equalitarian democracy. It involved the problem of harmonizing political democracy with economic socialism and was solved to the satisfaction of the people. This account of how it was done, how it operates, and with what results, is illuminating, exhaustive, and objectively handled. The last chapter appraises the sociocultural value of the experiment from the viewpoint of an unbiased liberal.

Mr. Laski's appraisal of the American experiment affords a sharp contrast with the preceding. Mr. Laski, however, makes no comparison unless (by implication) it is that of American democracy as it is, as against what it was designed to be. With full appreciation of the major part this

country is to play in the shaping of the world's destiny, this brilliant political historian is concerned that the world should know both the clear and the clouded side of the United States' claim to world leadership. In a monumental work, comparable to Tocqueville and Bryce, Mr. Laski reviews three hundred years of American tradition and with admirable objectivity interprets them. His comments are by no means those of an ill-informed outsider. Thirty years of acquaintance with American institutions—starting with a place on the Harvard faculty—and with liberal leaders such as Justices Holmes and Brandeis, with whom he was intimate, inform his views. Further, his knowledge of this country's political and economic history, its legislators, judges, executives, party leaders, political machines, and motivations, is astonishingly wide. We particularly recommend to the general reader Chapter XIV, "Americanism as a Principle of Civilization," in which the essence of the author's findings is summed up.

In *The Balance of Power*, Henry Lee Moon has effectively reviewed the results of the denial of full citizenship to Negro citizens. They are concrete, far-reaching, and politically sinister. They induce the same sort of discontent with the social and economic order that wrecks the stability and endangers the peace of Europe; they open a breach for the easy entrance and spread of radical doctrines, and they discredit America's claims as a democracy. To the great credit of the mass of Negro Americans, Mr. Moon can report that a separatist movement, sparked by Moscow, for a Negro "Nation" got nowhere. Knowing themselves

to be a part of the national culture, the Negroes' demand "has been and continues to be for integration as the only means of attaining equality." The author takes up their voting strength and its strategic diffusion; he analyzes the states where the Negro vote holds the balance of power in the '48 election, in which the issue of civil rights will play so large a part. He closes with a splendid statement of the "Ultimate Objective"—basic equality: economic, political, civil, and educational.

Recurring to Lipson's account (above) of a government really responsible to the

people, we find portrayed in Dixon Wecter's *The Age of the Great Depression* (Macmillan. \$5) the result of a tradition that the government is something remote from the citizen's daily life, indifferent to his real needs, and also suspect because it is largely in the hands of politicians. If that view culminated in the crash of '29, events after '33 changed it with the suddenness of shock. Covering the effects of the Depression on American thinking, science, youth, age, labor, and social life, as well as legislation, this book is as lively and absorbing as it is informative, scholarly and shrewd.

## AMERICANS FOR LIBERTY

Hertha Pauli and E. B. Ashton, co-authors of *I Lift My Lamp* (Appleton-Century. \$4), have given us the full story of the Statue of Liberty from its birth as an idea in the mind of Edouard Laboulaye, French liberal, through the trying years in which Auguste Bartholdi, Alsatian sculptor, worked to sell that idea to the people of France and America, to the final unveiling of the finished work—October 1886. These co-authors—Miss Pauli, a Viennese exile—both versed in European traditions but fired with a zeal for American liberty—have done more: they have shown a significance of the symbol and a meaning unglimped either by the French donors or the American sponsors for its installation—a meaning given it by millions of incoming fugitives from lands where liberty was not.

A reading of Edward N. Saveth's *American Historians and European Immigrants* (Columbia University Press. \$3) brings out the fact that at the time when Bartholdi, his American friends, and the French Committee were strug-

gling to win sympathy and practical aid for installing a truly great symbol of liberty here, leading historians were propounding the Teutonic theory of modern institutions and the Germanic or Anglo-Saxon origins of our liberties—along with race-superiority for that stock—and were disparaging immigrant stock and influence as a national menace. Fiske, Shaler, and Bancroft were among them, with a host of minor historians and authors of sorts. So widespread was this feeling that James Russell Lowell, poet and American envoy to England, could say to Emma Lazarus on reading her lines on the statue, "Your sonnet gives its subject a *raison d'être* which it wanted before"—"wanted," of course, in the consciousness of a people concerned about the invasion of their prerogatives by folk of other heritage. Dr. Saveth's fine study shows that not till after 1925 were there trained historians who understood the real meaning of immigrant history. Outstanding among these was Marcus L. Hansen.

Max Savelle's *Seeds of Liberty* (Knopf. \$6.50) is a cultural study of origins. American inheritance, he shows, was social and ideological. Colonial English influence early fused with Dutch, Swedish, Celtic, French, Jewish, Swiss, and German, even while the shell of Puritan statism was breaking with the spread of Newtonian science. What emerged was not English, nor anything else foreign to the land. It was American. Dr. Savelle finds it "the product of a living experience, peculiar to that time and place." By 1750 a distinctive, new, cultural pattern had formed about the core of freedom. In this sumptuous text of 587 pages, no cultural aspects are neglected. Citations cover the literature, art, architecture, and music of 1660 to 1770. Notable is the attention given to "minority" cultures in the section on Music in Early America.

Frank Freidel's *Francis Lieber* (Louisiana State University Press. \$4.50) is the story of a young German immigrant who at the age of 16 had fought under Blücher at Waterloo, then with the Greeks for liberty, then for ideas in the German universities. Exiled because of those ideas, he came to America, where his liberalism matched what he found here and his gifts won him wide recognition. An electric personality, he compelled respect as a publicist, a writer, and in college classrooms. The tale of his contacts with men and movements, North and South, brings out all shades of opinion; shows the progressive strides in prison reform and education (in both of which he was an acknowledged leader); reveals the clash of sectional politics and drag of conservatism from the early 1820s to the Civil War. Notable as a biography, the broader interest of Dr. Freidel's book is as a mirror of that troubled time.

Retiring with dignity from the Governorship of Georgia—first having blocked the putsch that would have in-

stalled a fascist usurper—Ellis Gibbs Arnall toured the forty-seven states outside his own to speak his mind and find out *What the People Want* (Lippincott. \$3.50). In refreshing contrast to the confusion of the political mind reported daily in the press, he found bedrock opinion united the country over as to aims and desires. Texas plainsmen, cotton farmers, Basque shepherds, factory workers of all national origins, educators, plain people—they wanted liberty and progress, equal opportunity for every citizen, to make "this common country of ours" into one nation. For acuity and vision, a book worth reading thrice.

In part, Ralph G. Martin's report in *The Best Is None Too Good* (Farrar, Straus. \$3.50) is the story of what men and women who came home from the war (14 million of them) wanted, expected, were promised—and what they found. A sad tale, in the main, of disillusion, and one that needed telling. But when it reaches a point in Athens, Tennessee, and a date of April 17, 1946, fire begins to crackle, a flame spreads through the States, and hearts are kindled at the sight of what a few cr's could do to get what was due them, and due all the citizens of McMinn County by way of fair elections, good government, and guarding of civil rights. The world knows the story, but the fullest and best account of it is here—how the rule of thugs and murderers was ousted by a few determined men. The story of Hodding Carter and his Greenville Delta-Times-Democrat is as good—of editorials "subtle as a sledge hammer," persistent, unafraid.

*Nobody Owns Us*, by David Douthitt (Cooperative League of the U.S.A. \$2), is both the story of a man and of a cause. Joe Gilbert, the man, was a steerage passenger to the U.S. at age eighteen. British-born apprentice to the carpet trade, he seems to have been a natural American

from birth. "Nobody owns me," he told the man who caned him for his independent spirit as a boy. Over here he learned to say "Nobody owns us." After a stormy career as champion of political freedom, he became, in middle life, a leader in the fight for economic freedom through the co-operative movement, to which he devoted the brilliant talents of his mature years. Told by one who worked under him, this narrative illuminates the movement itself.

Without question, Fiorello H. La Guardia will be remembered as a champion of the people's liberties. *The Making*

of an *Insurgent* (Lippincott. \$2.75) is his own story as far as it was completed before his death. It reveals the spark of passion for justice kindled in his boyhood in Arizona, where his father was stationed with the military, when he saw Indians defrauded by slick political agents. That spark grew to a lifelong contempt for political chicanery, party politics, and machines. In an Introduction, M. R. Werner (who worked with him and will complete the biography) describes the qualities that made La Guardia a unique and tireless worker for every progressive goal.

## RACIAL AND CULTURAL BEGINNINGS

In *Anthropology*, by Alfred Louis Kroeber (Harcourt, Brace. \$7.50), we have an impressive interpretation of recent discoveries bearing on human origins and cultures. Dr. Kroeber reviews all the latest finds but centers interest on the cultural development of man from his far-flung origins. Skills and arts are considered along with native endowments and with a special stress on language as a distinctive human gift indispensable to any true human culture. Plain facts are presented, plausible theories are tested, and the reader may draw his own conclusions—equipped by the reading of this text to detect myths, errors, and bits of slovenly reasoning that breed racist pretensions, hates, and rivalries.

Another outstanding new work on human origins is *Human Ancestry*, by R. Ruggles Gates (Harvard University Press. \$7.50). The point of view is that of a geneticist working in the field of anthropology. A specialist, he traces human inheritance to its beginnings, thence works back on the trail of development and distributions of varied types of the human

species existing today. Most appealing to American readers is his study of migration waves from Siberia to Alaska and thence down to the southern Americas. Achievements of such migrants in Central and South America—maize culture, for example—indicate a very early date for their arrival. Other evidence—such as fifty language formations in North America alone—place it at no less than 20,000 years ago. Fascinating in content, the subject matter is handled with technical precision rather than for popular appeal. Some new theories are advanced, subject to further investigation—to which, indeed, this book is a spur.

Ralph Linton (Yale anthropologist), aided by Mrs. Linton, writes of *Man's Way From Cave to Skyscraper* (Harper. \$2.50) to bring before everyday readers a sound view of race issues to replace a perverted one. Vivid, practical, scientific, but non-technical, this account of origins and inheritances is informing and wholly appealing. Equally good for the schoolroom and the home.

Abram Leon Sachar's *A History of the*

Jews (Knopf. \$5), unlike earlier work in this field, is both racial and cultural—and modern. In pushing inquiry back into the mists of the third millennium B.C., it is probing the beginnings of all Western culture. A book as scholarly, authentic, and yet fascinatingly readable would have been an event any time. At its first appearance in 1929 it may have been recognized as such by few other than Jewish readers; but this new and enlarged edition of 1948, integrating and illuminating earth-shaking upheavals since '29, with its superb writing, commands the attention of all readers and will win praise from all save the incurably prejudiced. For those who would know and can face the truth.

Arna Bontemps' *Story of the Negro* (Knopf. \$3) is swift-moving history, a racial story of large scope and significance: that of a people despoiled by aggressors

for many centuries, yet with the vitality to survive and meet challenges where older civilizations have signally failed. All through it one senses the dignity of that race. Fresh air is blown through the dusty pages of formalized history. This is the Odyssey of a great people, with an appeal to youth.

*Everyman's History of the Jews*, by Sulamith Ish-Kishor (Frederick Fell. \$3.50), is a re-telling of the Book of Habirus (Bible), a history of that people, and an account of the development of a world-faith, all in one. Written with deep insight, as simple as it is elevated, this is a popular, readable history that a child can read and an adult enjoy too. The paradox of Jesus, Jewish prophet and martyr who became God incarnate of the Christians, is made understandable without stirring dissension.

## MEN AND ISSUES

*Eisenhower Speaks*, a selection of his addresses and messages by Rudolph L. Treuenfels (Farrar, Straus. \$3), shows why this man has the abiding confidence of the people. Facing world issues more dangerous than those of the late war, he is articulate on how to meet them. Ever recurring in these addresses are three themes: mutual understanding, co-operation, and education. The third is paramount in the production of leaders. He said in Boston (1946), "I see no hope for the world except through education"; and in Washington, the same year, to graduating veterans, "With your knowledge of war you will fight the indifference, the blind complacency, the sheer selfish laziness that more than once have permitted war to burst upon us."

The issue for Sumner Welles when he

writes *We Need Not Fail* (Houghton Mifflin. \$2.50) is not alone that of justice for the Palestinian Jewish State. It is also the fate of Western civilization with its representatives in the United Nations yielding, on the plea of "expediency," to a course marked by perfidy, cowardice, and indecision. Mr. Welles' book is a clear-cut exposure of this course and its evil consummation, of which Thomas Mann has said, "This surrender to brazen Arab threats is the most humiliating shocking political event since the democracies betrayed Czechoslovakia in 1938." Both he and the author of *We Need Not Fail* speak for the awakened conscience of our time.

China, too, ties in with the fate of the West. "Our China Problem," as John King Fairbank puts it in his *The United*

States and China (Harvard University Press. \$3.75), is a world problem on which the world has been badly informed. Seven years in China, fluency in the language, experience as teacher in a national university there, and wartime service, all equip Professor Fairbank (now of Harvard) to dispel this lack of information. He has done it objectively, impartially, and well. We commend particularly his correctives for our thinking, and his cautions: "We neglect the moral and ideological factors in social change abroad" and "We refuse to take account of foreign points of view."

By no means as objective as the above, but on that account more stunningly emphatic and memorable, are the words you'll find in *The Stilwell Papers*, edited by Theodore H. White (William Sloane. \$4). Culled from journal entries not intended for publication, they are given to the public now because they throw vivid light on unknown phases of history. Factual in the main, they cut like a lash where the lash is needed. Thus: "I have faith in Chinese soldiers and Chinese people: fundamentally great, democratic, misgoverned. No bars of caste or religion. . . ." And of their Kuomintang government: "Corruption, neglect, chaos . . . hoarding, black market, trading with the enemy."

The issue for which Rebecca Chalmers Barton's *Witnesses for Freedom* (Harper. \$3.50) lived and fought was a single one—full liberty for the Negro—but many-sided. To cover all these aspects Mrs. Barton chose twenty-three Negroes with as many shades of attitude or approach to their problem. Using their autobiographies as a vehicle, she analyzes their life-stories. Avoiding the temptation to "type" them, she assays each as a personality struggling against prejudice. In four parts, she follows their careers from slavery up to present social and civil prob-

lems, as the Accommodators, the Achievers, the Experimenters, and the Protestors for a New Freedom. A keenly discerning book.

*The Story of John Hope*, by Ridgely Torrence (Macmillan. \$5), is that of another witness for freedom who embodied every aspect of the Negro-white problem by reason of his birth, background, convictions, and (consistent with them) his life. Fair, blond, and blue-eyed, with advantageous northern connections and university degrees, he chose to identify himself with the Negro race and cause at its critical period after the Civil War. Ridgely Torrence, poet and dramatist (author of the first plays for the Negro theater), tells John Hope's story and that of his family. Charm, integrity, ability, and unswerving devotion to honor mark the whole high-spirited line as well as the great educator whose life-story this is.

For Manuel Buaken, when he wrote *I Have Lived With the American People* (Caxton Printers. \$4), the issue was, have the Filipinos deserved the abuse they have had at the hands of some Americans, and are they inferior as a race? Both the abuses and charges are fully documented by one who has been himself a victim. It comes as a shock to some of us who have thought of the Pajaro Valley in California as an orchard paradise with idyllic towns dotting it to learn that violent attacks occurred there on the property and persons of Filipinos brought in only to be exploited; attacks undeterred by the citizenry and supported by courts and judges. As for racial inferiority, Buaken pays tribute to many native tribes, even the pagan Igorots, whom he knew at the schools in Baguio (they enrolled wearing the G string). He shows them superior to Filipino Christians in every subject, far ahead in mathematics, surveying, and drawing.



Keith Sward, a practicing clinical psychologist, made a ten year study of *The Legend of Henry Ford* (Rinehart. \$5) with intent to clear the riddle of that multiple personality and the mystery of an era that raised a common mechanic to a world pinnacle of fame and fabulous wealth. He has proved himself a tireless chronicler of facts not available hitherto and jealously hid from the public during Ford's lifetime. Among them is his proved anti-Semitism and responsibility for the Dearborn articles (denied by him during a libel suit) and the printing of the "International Jew," republished by the Nazis in 12 languages and quoted by Hitler in *Mein Kampf*. Finding of Fritz Kuhn's name on the Ford payroll is inter-

esting; also that of connections with the gangsters' underground. A closing chapter clears Henry Ford II of all such connections, and gives present management a clean bill.

Virginia Cunningham's *Paul Lawrence Dunbar and His Song* (Dodd, Mead. \$2.75), an intimate biography of the poet by a fellow-Daytonian—the story of a struggle up toward freedom of spirit, and recognition of a gift—is an answer to any Negro boy or girl who, knowing the handicap of color, asks, "What's the use?" Despite the encouragement of his teachers and classmates in Dayton High School the town barred Dunbar from all but menial jobs. He had to build his niche in the temple of fame brick by brick.

## SAGA OF A CONTINENT, SOUTH

*The Southern Americas*, by Abel Plenn (Creative Age. \$4), is a chronicle in time and a panorama in space, made vivid by welding into one continuous narrative the reports of those who saw events and scenes of centuries ago and recorded them (the archives of the Mayans, Quichés, Incas). Blending with these are reports of European visitors from 1495 on to world-travelers of today. Binding the whole, are commentaries by the author himself. These are printed in oblique type, done in heightened language, rich in metaphor, suggesting the rhythm of an epic, while the medium is prose. Here in this volume are ancient folk who from earliest times have suffered conquest and exploitation; leaders and heroes in the long fight for liberty, and plain folk wanting not power but a better life: a succession of dissolving scenes from pre-Columbian centuries to our day.

Hernane Tavares de Sá invites you to

meet and know *The Brazilians*, "People of Tomorrow" (John Day. \$3), as they are today. Opening with delightfully informal chapters to promote social acquaintance, he passes on to a highly informative review of the national goals and ideals, official or otherwise, and the hopes of a people—hopes that neither dictatorship nor upper-class rule has fulfilled. Government, writes the author, is always upper-class, and the people are "often deceived, always forgotten, always forsaken." Yet they are "human beings in the full, vibrant, creative sense of the word."

Paul Blanshard's *Democracy and Empire in the Caribbean* (Macmillan. \$5) gives a critical analysis of the working of a system under which bits of old-world empire remain under the domination of a white élite, while the darker-hued masses are exploited. This economic imperialism has proved a failure, unprofit-

able to all concerned, and the whole Caribbean region remains "a poorhouse in America's back yard." Democracy's hope, here outlined, is regional integration and a linkage with world organization. A positive program, and precise steps to be taken in achieving it, are given.

Edward Tomlinson's *Battle for the Hemisphere* (Scribner. \$3.50) treats of the fight from within the Latin American countries for fuller realization of the liberties which Bolivar, San Martin, and Bernardo O'Higgins won for them, and which the Perons, Trujillos, Somezas of today, yesterday's Vargas, and the earlier Diaz and Gomez have taken away. All dictators invariably pose as "apostles of a new era of freedom and prosperity," but the people, soon disillusioned, must struggle on. Explicit, dependable, with full analysis of leading political figures and movements, the book is standard for reference, and readable.

Frances Toor's *A Treasury of Mexican Folkways* (Crown. \$5) avoids politics and unveils through text and picture a veritable museum of folk arts, ceremonies, fiestas, customs, myths, tales, songs, and dances. Photographs from life (168 of them) and some fine colored plates enhance the theme, besides line drawings scattered through the text. Miss Toor, of

the University of Mexico and an authority on folkways, has worked on this project fifteen years.

*These Are the Mexicans*, by Herbert Cerwin (Reynal & Hitchcock. \$5), reveals deep concern for a people among whom he has lived the best part of his life. Unexcelled in his understanding of these people, and with a gift for intuitive grasp of matters fundamental to their welfare, Mr. Cerwin tells in simple straightforward terms what a good neighbor should know. Dr. Morley, leading expert on Mayan civilization, says of it, "This is the best book on modern Mexico I have ever read."

*East of the Andes and West of Nowhere*, by Nancy Bell Bates (Scribner. \$3.50), is the story of what one good neighbor is doing to stamp out one bane from which the South Americans long have suffered, by tracking the yellow-fever mosquito to its non-human hosts. To do this, Marshall Bates, naturalist, seeks out the breeding places of the pests, between the Andes and the Amazon. His wife, who is the granddaughter of Alexander Bell and who learned from her father, David Fairchild, to love an explorer's ways, tells of the life they lead on the edge of the llanos, boundless grassy plains. A lively and entertaining chronicle.

## CALL THEM EDUCATIONAL

Books on many themes, from many angles, converge on education for the world, for human relations, for knowing people, for purging ourselves of follies bred of ignorance, and for the zest that life in One World can contain for all of us.

A monumental work of that character appeared in 1944, Gunnar Myrdal's *An American Dilemma*. A condensed version of that great report of over 1500 pages is

now issued as *The Negro in America*, 325 pages, prepared by Arnold M. Rose (Harper. \$3.75), chief of the group that worked with Myrdal on the original book. Its essence is here, as the Foreword vouches: "No significant point of view, body of facts, or main conclusion is left out."

For Esther Warner, who writes of a *New Song in a Strange Land* (Houghton

Miffin. \$3.50), education in *One World* values began on an Iowa farm where, as a small girl, she tried to see beyond "the next horizon" and her mother showed her how, on the map. It continued when at Columbia University studying sculpture she saw carved masks from the interior of Liberia and yearned to go to their jungle source. Then, as wife of a research botanist, she went. She saw. She completely won the hearts of these forest folk who saw in her carvings a skill they could set above their own. But how she was won and charmed by these unspoiled forest folk is more than we can begin to tell. It has to be read in this most enchanting of all the books (since *Land Below the Wind*) that drop us down in horizons unimaginably far from our own.

Dr. Vishnu V. Oak, author and publisher, offers *The Negro Newspaper* as Volume I of a series, *The Negro Entrepreneur* (P.O. Box 5, Wilberforce University, Xenia, Ohio. \$2.50). As director of publicity at Wilberforce University he has had close insight into the workings of the Negro press. His book is a frank evaluation, giving both the favorable and unfavorable sides.

In his Introduction to *A Treasury of Jewish Folklore* (Crown. \$4), editor Nathan Ausubel remarks that "the fundamental role of folklore in the creation of culture is yet insufficiently recognized." He adds that within the context of its social and cultural history, Jewish folklore (possessing a greater unity than any other) yields "a democratic philosophy of education in antiquity." Austrian-born scholar and historian, he presents this 6-part collection of 750 stories and 75 songs in the hope that a reading of them will draw folk of all races and nations closer in the bonds of brotherhood and understanding. Rich alike in humor and wisdom, the book is a real treasury.

Marion Vallat Emrich and George

Korson, compilers of *The Child's Book of Folklore* (Dial. \$2.75), say in a Preface (For Grown-ups) that folklore has recently been discovered as a source of enduring values. This selection of songs, ballads, rhymes, games, tales, beliefs, and customs casts a wide net and produces a hoard of fun and satisfying experience.

For the same age, Flora Bailey's *Summer at Yellow Singer's* (Macmillan. \$2.50), although in story form, is really an account of Indian ways and traditions and dances in New Mexico by one who has studied them for many years. Many Indian legends are given in full, as well as ceremonials and magic—all in their colorful native background.

Geoffrey Gorer's *The American People* (Norton. \$3) turns a psychologist's insight, a visitor's detachment, and a witty observer's humor, on things too close and familiar to be fairly or critically seen by most Americans. Thus, he notes that the criteria for Americanism include appearance, clothes, ideology, and language; but ideology is far less important (for most) than the appearance. A vein of irony that runs through the book becomes sharper toward the end, as in a chapter on "Lesser Breeds." Much of it is deserved.

R. M. MacIver, nationally known leader in cultural relations, has gathered into concise, comprehensive chapters those key points in political, educational, and economic fronts that make for *The More Perfect Union* (Macmillan. \$4), now marred and threatened by prejudice and discrimination. Strategy for better community procedures is given in this unusually penetrating and useful volume.

*Higher Education for American Democracy* is the report of The President's Commission on Higher Education (Harper. \$3.75)—six volumes bound in one. Vol. I, *Establishing the Goals*, calls for "a schooling better aware of its aims,"

with re-education of populations to the individual responsibilities of democracy as a basic goal, deplors the splintering of liberal education by overspecialization, and urges transmission of a common cultural heritage toward a common citizenship for free men. Vol. II, *Equalizing and Expanding Individual Opportunity*, speaks out clearly for leadership against

discrimination and the repeal of segregation laws, without which decisive progress cannot be made. The remaining volumes treat of Organizing, Staffing, and Financing of Higher Education, with tabulated Resource Data as Vol. VI. Men of distinction in business as well as in the professions shared in the framing of this stirring statement of educational faith.

## FICTION NOTES

Read in connection with any novel, new or old, by a Negro writer, Hugh Morris Gloster's *Negro Voices in American Fiction* (University of North Carolina Press. \$3.50) will aid materially in gauging the book's worth and the author's achievement. In a book-by-book report of fiction by Negro authors from the 1870s to now, Gloster tells the early struggle to get a hearing, the aping of current models (plantation myth, stock characters), and the final emergence of a distinctive writing with a fictive gift second to none.

Dorothy West's *The Living Is Easy* demonstrates precisely what Gloster has described, in a novel of social Boston (Houghton Mifflin. \$3.50), in which climbers on the social ladder are Negroes, individual and unlike as can be—even as sisters—and with virtues and vices mingled as only life can blend them in a single soul.

But novels about Negroes by white authors are on the increase. *Summer on the Water*, by David Westheimer (Macmillan. \$3), is one. Here is lazy water in a Gulf-Coast inlet and futile and somewhat decadent white folks ascendant over dark-skinned ones who are vital and human, and on whom white influence rests as a blight. Deception, infidelity, wanton insult to color, and the mental lesions behind them—all are subtly

analyzed against a background of nature's peace and magic evocations.

Another—but in a different vein—is David Alman's *The Well of Compassion* (Simon & Schuster. \$3). Intensely personal in its accents, it brings two young artists—one a Negro youth, the other a white girl—into a relation that culminates in marriage; deploys the psychic rather than the social complications that ensue.

*South Wind Blows*, by Clark Porteous (Current Books. Wynn. \$2.50), gives the reaction of nineteen persons to the lynching of Ab Lacey, a Negro. With incredible fidelity to the idiom of each, come the confessions of a reporter, a doctor, a school teacher, a preacher, a farmer, a deputy, and others who, knowing the crime to be imminent, lacked the courage to speak out against it. Nothing yet in print could serve so well to stab awake the conscience of the South, if widely read there. New Orleans-born, now in Memphis, Clark Porteous is one of the South's top newspaper men.

Joseph George Hitrec left Yugoslavia at 19, lived in India, and wrote *Son of the Moon* (Harper. \$3) to show the response of India's youth to the challenge of the West, and their clash with the tradition and its master plan, the Indian family.

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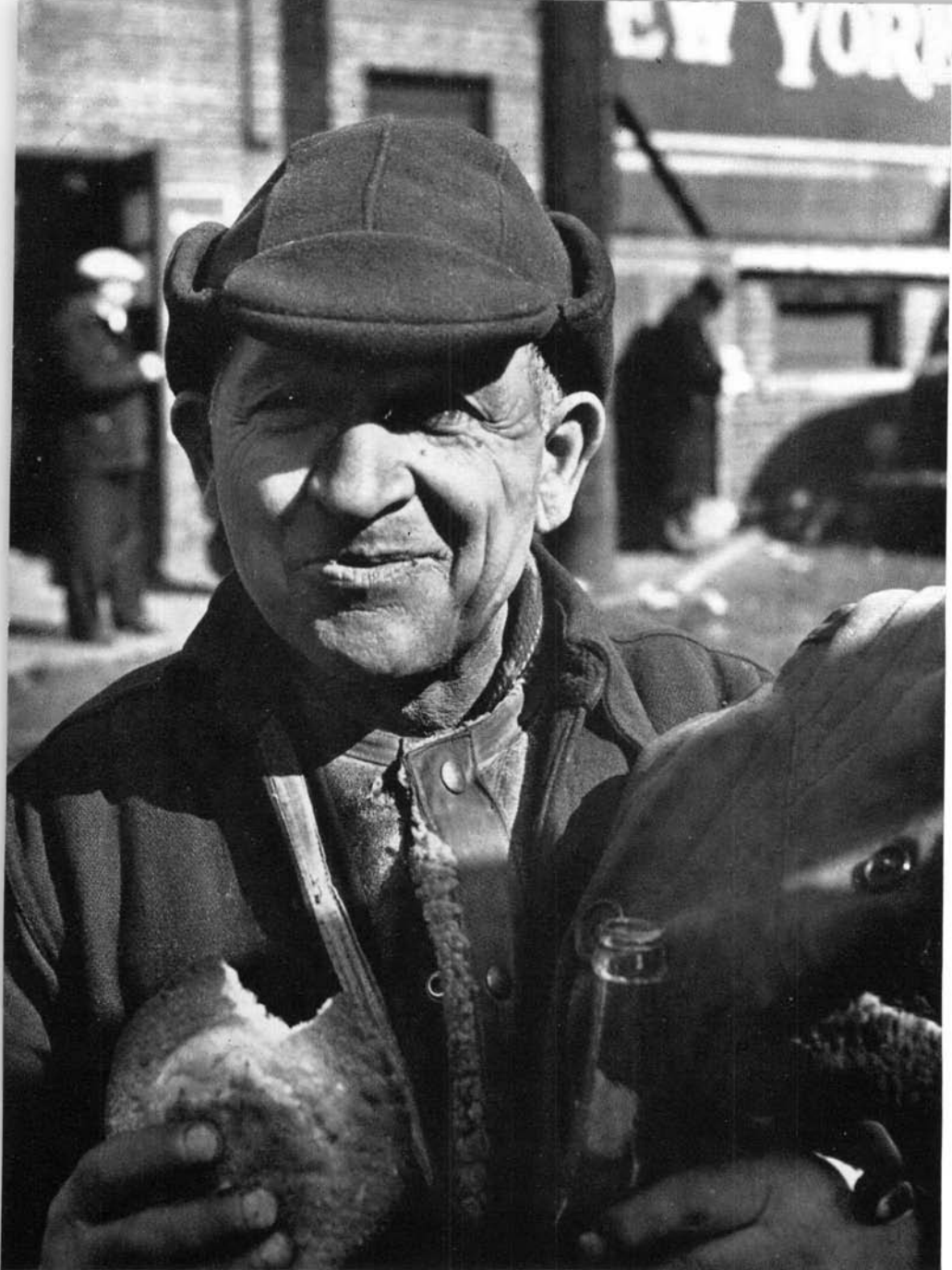




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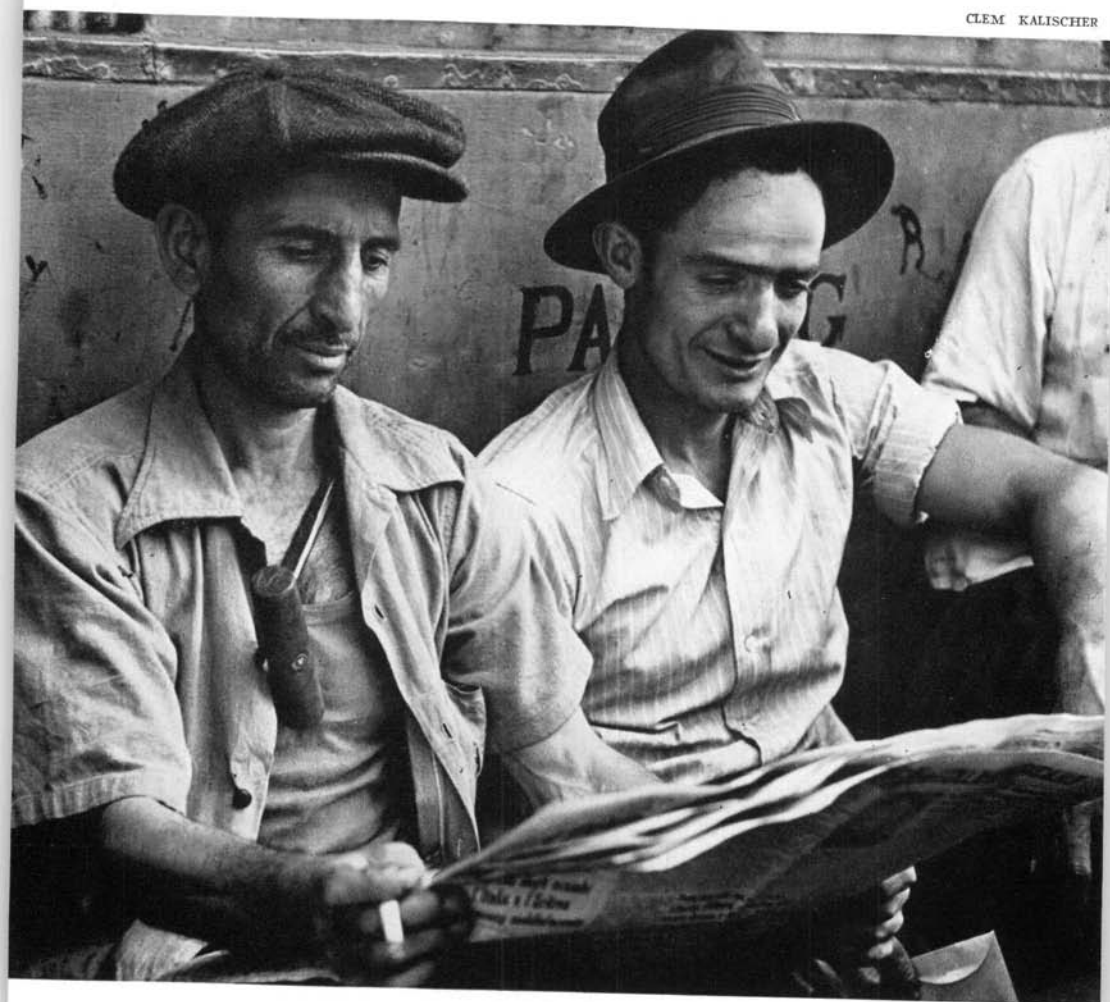
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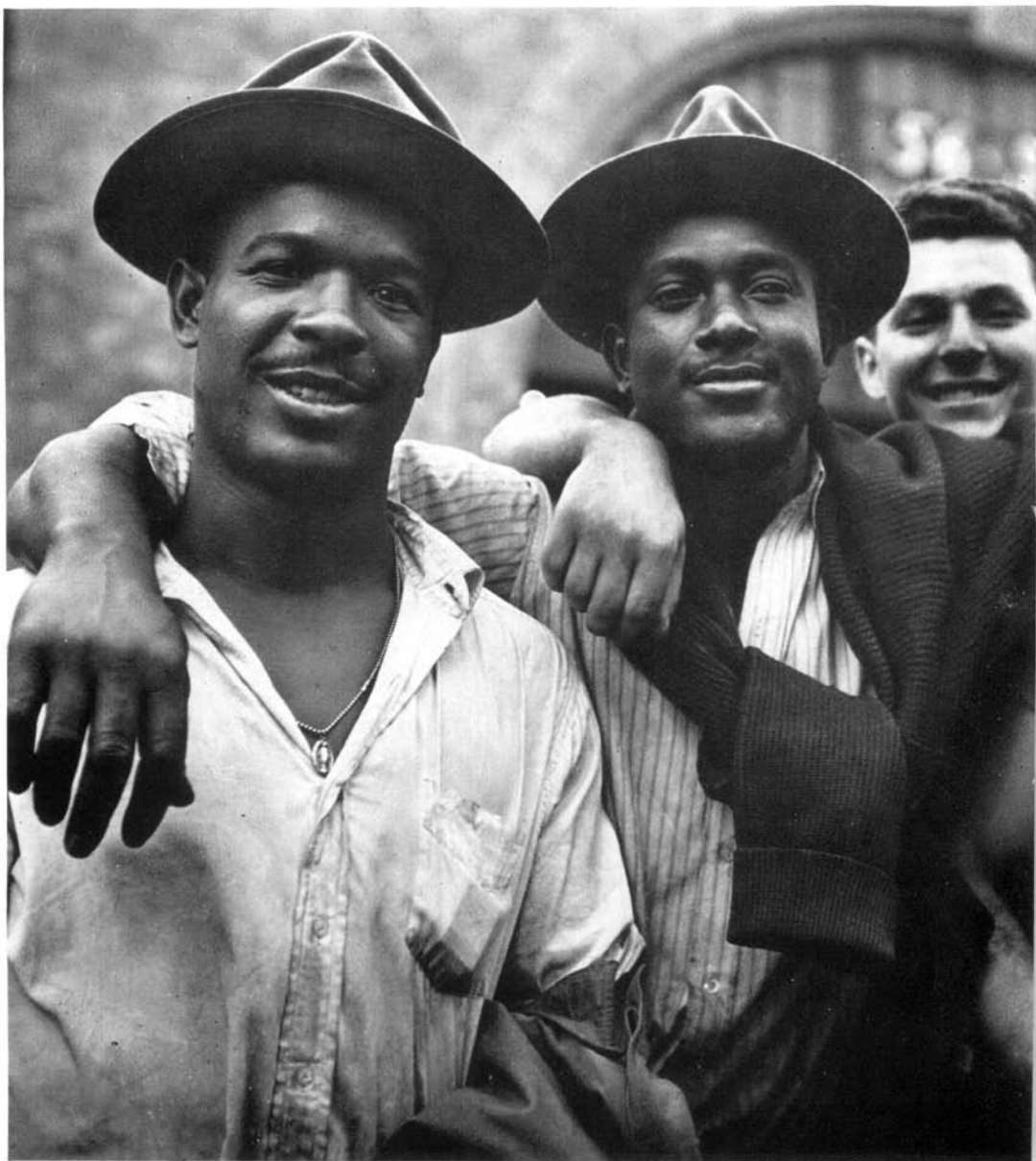
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*Time off after lunch  
for the paper and a smoke*

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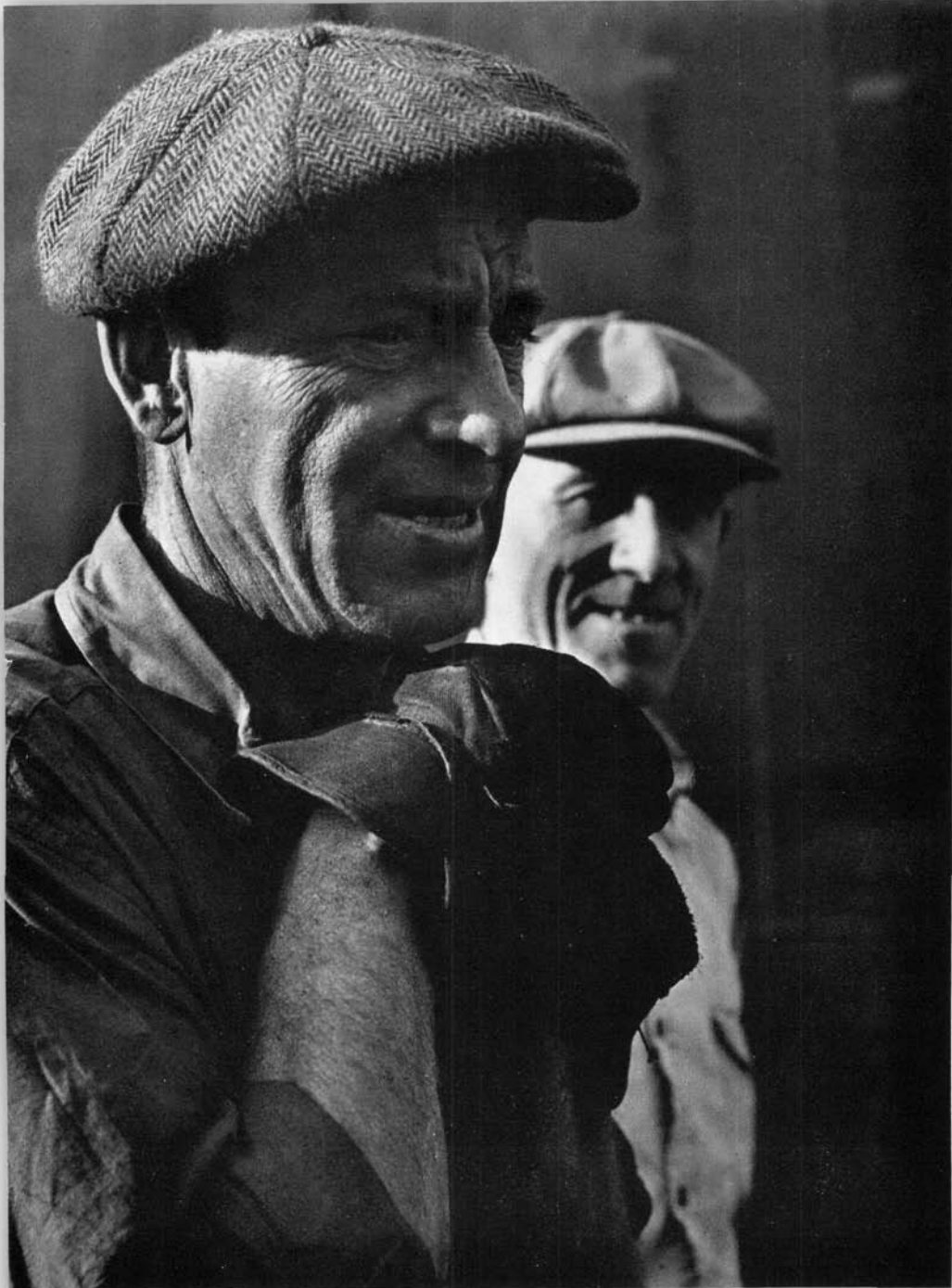






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*The day's work done*



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*He has seen many ships,  
handled many cargoes.*